Apples of Gold

FOR

Young Men and Women,

AND

A CROWN of GLORY for Old Men and Women.

OR,

The Happiness of being Good betimes, And the Honour of being an Old Disciple.

Clearly and fully discovered, and closely and faithfully applied.

ALSO,

The Young Mans Objections answered. And the Old Mans Doubts resolved.

By *THOMAS BROOKS* Preacher of the Gospel at *Margarets* New *Fishstreet-hill.*

The Fourth Edition corrected.

But I thy Servant fear the Lord from my youth, 1 Kings 18 12.

The hoary head is a Crown of Glory, if it bee found in a way of Righteousness, Prov. 16. 31.

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To all Young Persons throughout the Nations, especially those (of both Sexes) who begin to turn their faces towards *Zion*.

Dear Hearts,

A Word spoken in due season, how good is it? it is often like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver; many times such a word is sweet, precious, pleasing, delectable, and strong in its operation. A company of near friends dining together one Sabbath day, one that was at Table (to prevent impertinent discourse) said, That it was a question whether they should all go to Heaven or no, which struck them all into a dump, and caused every one to enter into a serious consideration with themselves, one thought

Prov. 15. 23. 25. 10 11. A word spoken (*gnalophnau*) upon his wheels, that is, with a due concurrence and observation of all circumstances of time, place, person, all which are as the wheels upon which our words & speeches should run, such a word is like apples of gold in Pictures of silver.

if any of this company go to Hell, it muſt bee I, and ſo thought another, and another, and indeed, ſo thought almoſt every one then preſent, as well ſervants that waited, as thoſe that ſat at the Table, as it was afterwards acknowledged, and (through the mercy and bleſſing of God) this ſpeech ſo wrought upon the ſpirits of moſt of them, that it proved the firſt inſtrument all means of their converſion.

I have my hopes, through grace, that this Treatiſe, though it bee ſown in weakneſs, yet by the bleſſing of the moſt High upon it, it may riſe in power, and bee an inſtrumental means of the winning of ſouls to Chriſt, which is my higheſt ambition in this world, and therefore I have broke thorow all difficulties, and carnall reaſonings, that might otherwiſe have ſtifled this babe in the womb, and kept it from ever ſeeing of the light.

I have read of an Emperour, that delighted in no undertakings, ſo much as thoſe which in the eſteem

of

of his Councellours and Captains were deemed most difficult and impossible, if they said such or such an enterprize would never bee accomplished, it was argument enough to him, to make the adventure, and hee usually prospered, hee seldome miscarried.

I have never found greater and choiser blessings to attend any of my poor weak Labours, than those that have been brought forth into the world through the greatest straights and difficulties.

Valerius Maximus *reports, that one telling a Souldier, going to war against the* Persians, *that they would hide the Sun with their Arrows, hee answered, wee shall fight best in the shade; nothing should discourage nor dishearten a souldier of Christ,* 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4. *Christ saith to all his Souldiers (as the black Prince his Father said to him, fighting as it were in blood to the knees, and in great distress) either vanquish or dye. Men of no resolution, or of weak resolution, will bee but little serviceable to the*

Valerius Maximus. lib. 3. c. de Fiducia.

Hist. of France. p. 196.

good of ſouls; ſuch watch-men as will bee free from the blood of ſouls, and bee ſerviceable to the intereſt of Chriſt in turning ſinners from darkneſs to light, muſt bee men of ſpirit and reſolution.

Auguſt. de tempore Serm. 256.

I remember Auſtin *beginneth one of his ſermons thus* (Ad vos mihi Sermo, O juvenes flos etatis, periculum mentis) *To you is my ſpeech, O young men, the flower of age, the danger of the minde.*

So ſay I, to you, O young men, do I dedicate the enſuing Treatiſe, and that firſt, becauſe the matter contained therein, doth primarily and eminently concern you.

And ſecondly, Becauſe of an earneſt deſire that I have of your internal and eternall welfare.

And thirdly, Becauſe of ſome late impulſes that have been upon my ſpirit, to leave this Treatiſe in your hands as a Legacy of my Love, and as a Teſtimony and Witneſſe of my (great) Ambition, to help forward your everlaſting Salvation.

And

And fourthly, Becauſe there is moſt hope of doing good amongſt you (as I evidence more at large in the following Treatiſe.)

And fifthly, To countermine the great underminer of your ſouls, whoſe great deſign is to poyſon you, and to poſſeſſe you in the morning of your daies.

Sixthly, To provoke others that are more able and worthy, to bee more ſerviciable to you in declaring themſelves, fully on this very ſubject, which none yet have done that I know of, though it bee a point of as great concernment to young perſons (eſpecially) as any I know in all the Scriptures.

Eph. 4. 14 A blinde eye is worſe than a lame foot, hee that had the leproſie in his head, was to be pronounced utterly unclean.

Seventhly and laſtly, Becauſe there are very many that do lye in wait to deceive, corrupt, and poiſon your perſons with God-diſhonouring, Chriſt-denying, Conſcience-waſting and Soul-damning opinions, principles, and blaſphemies.

I have read of one who boaſted and gloried in this, that hee had ſpent thirty years in corrupting and poy-

poyſoning of youth; doubtleſs many wretches, many monſters there bee among us, who make it their buſineſs, their glory, their all, to delude and draw young perſons to thoſe dangerous errours and blaſphemies that lead to deſtruction. Errour and folly (ſaith one very well) bee the knots of Satan, wherewith hee tyes children to the ſtake to bee burnt in Hell.

There is a Truth in what the Tragœdian *ſaid long ſince* (Venenum in auro bibitur) *Poyſon is commonly drunk out of a cup of gold; So is an errour or by-notion ſooneſt taken into the judgement and conſcience from perſons of the faireſt carriage, and ſmootheſt converſations. Errour is ſo foul an Hagge, that if it ſhould come in its own ſhape, a man would loathe it, and flye from it, as from Hell.*

If Jezabel *had not painted her face, ſhee had not gotten ſo many young doting Adulterers, to have followed her to their own ruine.*

Ah! Young man, young men, the

the bleſſing of the Lord upon your ſerious and diligent peruſal of this Treatiſe, may bee a happy means to preſerve you from being enſnared and deluded by thoſe monſters, who compaſs Sea and Land to make Proſelites for Hell. Mat. 23. 15.

And thus I have given you the reaſons of my dedicating this Treatiſe to the ſervice of your ſouls. I would willingly preſume that it will bee as kindly taken, as it is cordially tendred; I hope none of you, into whoſe hands it may fall, will ſay as once Antipater *King of* Macedonia *did, when one preſented him with a book treating of Happineſs, his anſwer was (*Ou Scholazo*) I have no leaſure.*

Ah! Young men and women, young men and virgins, as you tender the everlaſting welfare of your ſouls, as you would eſcape Hell, and come to Heaven, as you would have an intereſt in Chriſt, a pardon in your boſomes, as you would bee bleſſed here, and glorious hereafter, finde time, finde leaſure, to read over and over the following

Treatiſe

Treatise, which is purposely calculated for your eternal good. But before I go further, I think it needful in some respects, to give the world some further account of other reasons or motives that hath prevailed with mee to appear once more in Print; and they are these.

First, Having preached a Sermon occasionally upon these words (on which this following Discourse is built) I was earnestly importun'd to print the Sermon, by some worthy friends; I did as long as in modesty I could withstand their desires (judgeing it not worthy of them) but being at last overcome, and setting about the work, the breathings and comings in of God were such, as hath occasioned that one Sermon to multiply into many. Luther *tells us that when hee first began to turn his back upon Popery, hee intended no more, but to withstand Popish Pardons, and selling Indulgencies; yet neither would God, or his enimies let him alone, till hee resolved with* Moses *not to leave*

leave a hoof of Popery unopposed, &c. God many times in the things of the Gospel, carries forth his Servants beyond their intentions, beyond their resolutions. But

Secondly, The kind acceptance, and good quarter that my other peeces have found in the world, and those signall and multiplied blessings that have followed them, to the winning of many over to Christ, and to the building up of others in Christ, hath encouraged mee to present this Treatise to the World, hoping that the Lord hath a blessing in store for this also. Gracious experiences are beyond notions, and impressions; they are very quickening and encouraging.

Thirdly, That I might in some measure make up others neglects, whose age, whose parts, whose experiences, whose graces, hath long ca'led upon them to do something considerable in this way, and that they may bee provoked by my weak assay to do better, and to make up what is wanting through

my

my invincible infirmities, and ſpiritual wants and weakneſſes, which are ſo many, as may well make a ſufficient Apology for all the defects and weakneſſes that in this Treatiſe ſhall appear to a ſerious judicious eye. But

2 Cor. 5. 14. 2 Cor. 12. 15. *Solus amor neſcit difficultates.* Love knows no difficulties.

Fourthly, The love of Chriſt and ſouls hath conſtrained mee to it; as there is an attractive, ſo there is a compulſive virtue in divine Love. Love to Chriſt and ſouls, will make a man willing to ſpend, and bee ſpent; hee that prays himſelf to death, that preaches himſelf to death, that ſtudies himſelf to death, that ſweats himſelf to death, for the honour of Chriſt, and good of ſouls, ſhall bee no looſer in the end: Divine Love is like a rod of Myrtle, which, as Pliny reports, makes the Traveller that carries it in his hand, that hee ſhall never bee faint or weary. Divine Love is very operative (ſi non operatur, non eſt) if it do not work, it is an argument, it is not at all; Divine Love, like fire, is not idle, but active, hee that

that loves cannot bee barren; love will make the Soul constant and abundant in well-doing. God admits none to Heaven (*saith* Justin Martyr) *but such as can perswade him by their works, that they love him. The very Heathen hath observed, that God doth not love his children with a weak womanish affection, but with a strong masculine love; and certainly, they that love the Lord strongly, that love him with a Masculine love, they cannot but lay out their little all for him, and his glory. But*

Seneca.

Fifthly, I observe, that Satan and his instruments are exceeding busie and unwearied in their designs, attempts, and endeavours, in these daies, to corrupt and poyson, to defile and destroy the young, the tender, the most hopeful, and most flourishing plants among us.

It is said of *Marcellus* the *Roman* General, that hee could not bee quiet (*Nec victor, nec victus*) neither Conquered, nor Conqueror; such a one is Satan.

Latimer *told the Clergy in his time, that if they would not learn diligence, and vigilance, of the Prophets and Apostles, they should learn it of the Devil, who goes up and down*

down his Dioceſſes, and acts by an untired power, ſeeking whom hee may deſtroy; when the Wolves are abroad, the Shepheard ſhould not ſleep, but watch, yea double his watch, remembring that hee were better have all the blood of all the men in the world upon him, than the blood of one ſoul upon him, by his negligence, or otherwiſe.

Satan is a Lion, not a Lamb, a roaring Lion, not a ſleepy Lion, not a Lion ſtanding ſtill, but a Lion going up and down as not being contented with the Prey, the many millions of ſouls hee hath got, hee ſeeks whom hee may ſip up at a draught, as that word (καταπίν) in the 1 Pet. 5. 8. imports, his greateſt deſign, is to fill Hell with ſouls, which ſhould awaken every one to be active, and to do all that may bee done to prevent his deſign, and to help forward the ſalvation of ſouls.

Chryſ. in Mat. Ho. 15. Chryſoſtome compares good Paſtors to fountains that ever ſend forth waters, or Conduits that are alwayes running, though no pail bee put under.

But Sixthly,

Sixthly and laſtly, I know the whole life of man is but an hour to work in, and the more worke any man doth for Chriſt on Earth, the better pay hee ſhall have when hee comes to Heaven. Every man ſhall at laſt reap as hee ſows; Opportunities of doing ſervice for Chriſt, and ſouls, are more worth than a world; therefore I was willing to take hold on this, not knowing how ſoon I may put off this earthly Tabernacle; and remembring, that as there is no believing, nor repenting in the grave, ſo there is no praying, preaching, writing, nor printing in the grave; wee had need to bee up and doing, to put both hands to it, and to do all wee do with all our might, knowing, that the night draws on upon us, wherein no man can work.

1 Cor. 15. *ult.*

2 Cor. 9.6

2 Pet. 1. 13, 14. Eccl. 9.10

John 9. 4.

A Chriſtians dying day is the Lords pay day; that is a time to receive wages, not to do work. And thus I have given the World a true account of the Reaſons that moved mee to print the following diſcourſe; before I cloſe up, I deſire to ſpeak a

word to young persons, and another to aged persons, and then I shall take leave of both.

My request to you, who are in th Prim-rose of your daies, is this, if ever the Lord shall bee pleased so to own and Crown, so to bless, and follow this following discourse, as to make it an effectual means of turning you to the Lord, of winning you to Christ, of changing your Natures, and converting your Souls (for such a thing as that, I pray, hope, and beleeve) that then you would do two things for mee.

First, That you would never cease bearing of mee upon your hearts when you are in the Mount, that I may bee very much under the pourings out of the Spirit, that I may bee clear, high, and full in my communion with God, and that I may bee alwayes close, holy, humble, harmlesse, and blameless in my walkings with God; And that his work may more and more prosper in my hand.

Psa.66.16.
1 Pet.3.15.

Secondly, That you would by word of mouth, letter, or some other way, acquaint

acquaint mee with what the Lord hath done for your Souls, if hee ſhall make mee a ſpiritual Father to you; do not hide his grace from mee, but acquaint mee how hee hath made the ſeed that was ſown in weakneſs, to riſe in power upon you, and that

Firſt, That I may do what I can, to help on that work begun upon you, that your penny may become a pound, your mite a million, your drop an ocean.

Secondly, That I may the better Engliſh ſome impreſſions that have been upon my own ſpirit, ſince I begun this work.

Thirdly, That my joy and thankfulneſs may be increaſed, and my ſoul more abundantly engaged to that God, who hath bleſt the day of ſmall things to you, ponder theſe Scriptures, (2 Corinth. 7. 3, 4, 13. Phil. 2. 2. ch. 4. 1. Philemon verſe 7. 2 John 3. 4) And then be aſhamed, to declare what the Lord hath done for you, if you can. 1 Theſ. 2. 19, 20, 2 Cor. 9. 2. Mat. 25. 23 Dan. 12. 3. Pro. 11. 30.

Fourthly, It is better to convert one, than to civilize a thouſand; and

will turn more at last to a Ministers account in that day, wherein he shall say, Lo here am I, and the children that thou hast given mee, *Isa.* 8. 18. *such a man (with his spiritual children about him) shall look on God with more comfort and boldnesse than those that are onely able to say, Lo here am I, and the many Benefices; here am I, and the many Ecclesiastical dignities and glories; here am I, and the many hundreds a year that man had given, and I have gotten. But,*

Act. 9. 3. Isa. 6. 5. Mal. 2. 5, 6, 7, &c.

Fifthly and lastly, The conversion of others, is a secondary and more remote evidence of a mans own renovation and conversion, Paul *was converted himself, before God made him instrumental for others Conversion. Gods usual method is, to convert by them, who are converted.*

I do not remember any one instance in all the Scripture of Gods converting any by such who have not been converted first themselves; yet I know his grace is free, and the wind

blows

blows where it lists, when it lists, and as it lists.

To aged persons I have a word, and then I have done.

First, To Gray-headed Saints, Ah Friends, ah Fathers, would you see your honour, your happiness, your blessedness! then look into this Treatise, and there you will finde what an unspeakable honour it is to bee an Old Disciple, what a glory it is to bee good betimes, and to continue so to old age.

Secondly, To white-headed Sinners, whose spring is past, whose summer is overpast, and who are arrived at the fall of the leaf, and yet have a Hell to escape, a Christ to beleeve in, sins to pardon, hearts to change, souls to save, and Heaven to make sure; would such bee encouraged from Scripture grounds to repent, believe, and hope, that yet there is mercy for such; let them seriously peruse this Treatise, especially the latter part of it, and there they may finde enough to keep them from despairing, and to incourage them to

adventure their souls upon him that is mighty to save.

There are many things in this Treatise that are of use to all, and several things of moment, that are not every day preached nor read; I have made it as pleasurable as time would permit, that so it might bee the more profitable to the Reader, and that I might the better take the young man by (a holy) craft, which is a high point of heavenly wisdome, there being no wisdome to that of winning of souls. I shall now follow this poor peece with my weak prayers, that it may bee so blest from Heaven, as that it may bring in some, and build up others, and do good to all; And so rest

2 Cor. 12. ch. 15. 2. Pro. 11. 30.

Your Friend and Servant in the Gospel of Christ,

THOMAS BROOKS.

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1 *You must labour to acquaint your selves with*

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THE

THE Young-Mans Duty AND EXCELLENCY.

1 KING. 14. ch. 13. V.

And all Israel *shall mourne for him, and burie him: for her only of* Jeroboam *shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of* Israel, *in the house of* Jeroboam.

I SHALL only stand upon the latter part of this Verse, because that affords me matter most suitable to my design.

— *Because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of* Israel, *in the house of* Jeroboam.

These words are a commendation of *Abijahs* life, *in him was found some good thing toward the Lord*, &c. when *Abijah* was a Childe, *vers.* 3. 12. when he was in his young and tender years, he had the seeds of grace in him, hee had the Image of God upon him, hee could discern between good and evil, and he did that which pleased the Lord.

The Hebrew word (Nagnar) translated Childe, *vers.* 3. is very often applied to such as wee call Youth, or young men, *Exod.* 24. 5. *Numb.* 6. 11. 1 *Sam* 2, 17, *&c.*

Of such age and prudence, was *Abijah*, as that hee could chuse good, and refuse evil, hee was a *Lot* in *Sodome*, hee was good among the bad, the bent and frame of his heart was towards that which was good, when the heart both of his Father and Mother was

נַעַר

Is used for a young man, or stripling, Gen. 22. 5. and often for a servant, though he bee a man of ripe years, Est. 2. 2. Such as one Evangelist calleth young men, Luk. 12. 45. another calleth fellow-servants, Mat. 24. 49

was ſet upon evil. *Abijah* began to bee good betimes, hee croſt that that peſtilent Proverb, a young Saint, and an old Devil. 'Tis the glory and goodneſs of God, that hee will take notice of the leaſt good that is in any of his, 1 *Pet.* 3. 6. There was but one good word in *Sarah*'s ſpeech to *Abraham* and that was this, ſhee called him *Lord*, and this God mentions for her honour and commendation, *ſhee called him Lord*: God looks more upon one grain of Wheat, than upon a heap of Chaff; upon one ſhining Pearl, than upon a heap of rubbiſh. God findes a Pearl in *Abijah*, and he puts it into his Crown, to his eternal Commendation. *There was found in him ſome good thing toward the Lord*, &c, For the words, Th *There was found in him*, e Hebrew word *Matſa*, ſometimes ſignifies finding without ſeeking, *Iſa.* 65. 1. *I am found of them that ſought me not*, ſo *Pſal.* 11. *verſ.* 3. *The ſorrows of death compaſſed mee,*

and the pains of hell got hold upon me, I found trouble and sorrow. I found trouble which I look'd not for, I was not searching after sorrow, but I found it. There's an elegancy in the Original. The pains of Hell gat hold upon mee; So wee read, but the Hebrew is, The pains of Hell found mee (one word signifies both) they found mee, I did not find them. *There was found in Abijah some good thing towards the Lord, i. e.* there was found in him without searching, or seeking, some good thing towards the Lord, it was plain and visible enough, men might see and observe it without enquiring, or seeking, they might runne and read some good thing in him towards the Lord.

Secondly, The word sometime signifies, finding by seeking, or inquiry, *Isa.* 55. 6. *Seek yee the Lord, while he may be found, &c.* So upon search and inquiry, there was found in *Abijah* (though young) some good thing toward the Lord.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Sometimes the word notes the obtaining of that which is sufficient, *Josh.* 17. 16. *Numb.* 11, 32. *Judg.* 21. 14. in *Abijah* there was that good in him towards the Lord, that was sufficient to evidence the work of grace upon him, sufficient to satisfie himself and others, of the goodnesse and happinesse of his condition; though he died in the prime, and flower of his daies, &c.

And in him was found some good thing; the Hebrew word (*Tob*) that is here rendred good, signifies,

First, that which is right and just, 2 *Sam.* 15. 3. See thy matters are good and right, *i. e.* just and right.

Secondly, That which is profitable, *Deut.* 6. 11. *Houses full of all good things*, *i. e.* houses full of all profitable things.

Thirdly, That which is pleasing, 2 *Sam.* 19. 27. *Do what is good in thine eyes*, *i. e.* do what is pleasing in thine eyes.

Fourthly, That which is full and compleat, *Gen.* 15. 15. *Thou ſhalt be buried in a good old age*, i. e. thou ſhalt be buried when thine age is full and compleat.

Fifthly, That which is joyful and delightful, 1 *Sam.* 25. 8. *Wee come in a good day*, i. e. we come in a joyful and delightful day; now put all together, and you may ſee that there was found in *Abijah* when hee was young, that which was right and juſt, that which was pleaſing and profitable, and that which was matter of joy and delight.

In the words you have two things that are moſt conſiderable.

This age affords many ſuch Hypocrites, ſuch Monſters, &c.

Firſt, That this young mans goodneſs was towards the Lord God of *Iſrael*; many there are that are good, nay, very good towards men, who yet are bad, yea very bad towards God. Some there are who are very kind to the creature: and yet very unkind to their Creator; many mens goodneſs

nels towards the creature is like the rising Sun, but their goodnes towards the Lord is like a morning Cloud, or as the early dew, which is soon dried up by the Sun-beams, but *Abijah's* goodnes was towards the Lord, his goodnes faced the Lord, it look'd towards the glory of God. Two things makes a good Christian, good actions, and good aims; And though a good aim doth not make a bad action good, (as in *Uzzah*) yet a bad aim makes a good action bad (as in *Jehu*) whose justice was approved, but his policy punished, the first Chapter of *Hosea*, and the fourth verse, doubtless *Abijahs* actions were good, and his aims good; and this was indeed his glory, that his goodnes was towards the Lord. Hos. 6. 4

There may bee *Malum opus in bona materia*, as in *Jehues* zeal.

It's recorded of the *Catanenses*, that they made a stately Monument of Kingly magnificence, in remembrance of two Sons, who took their aged Parents upon

their backs, and carried them through the fire, when their Fathers house was all in a flame; these young men were good towards their Parents; but what is this to *Abijahs goodnesse towards the Lord*, &c? A man cannot be good towards the Lord, but hee will bee good towards others; but a man may bee good towards others, that is not good towards the Lord: Oh that mens practises did not give too loud a Testimony every day to this assertion! &c.

Happy are those souls that with the Sturgion or Crab-fish can swim against the stream of custome and example, and that with *Atticus*, can cleave to the right, though losing side.

Secondly, Hee was good among the bad, *Hee was good in the house of Jeroboam*; 'tis in fashion to seem (at least) to bee good among the good; but to bee really good among those that are bad, that are eminently bad, argues not only a truth of goodnesse, but a great degree of goodness; this young man was good, *in the house of Jeroboam, who made all Israel to sin*, who was naught, who was very naught; who was stark naught: and yet

yet *Abijah*, as the Fishes which live in the Salt-Sea are fresh; so though he lived in a (sink) a sea of wickednesse, yet hee retained his *goodnesse towards the Lord*.

They say Roses grow the sweeter, when they are planted by Garlick: they are sweet and rare Christians indeed, who hold their goodnesse, and grow in goodness, where wickednes sits on the throne; and such a one the young man in the Text was.

To bee Wheat among Tares, Corn among Chaffe, Pearls among Cockles, and Roses among Thorns, is excellent.

To bee a *Jonathan* in *Sauls* Court, to bee an *Obadiah* in *Ahabs* Court, to bee an *Abedmelech* in *Zedechias* Court, and to be an *Abijah* in *Jeroboams* Court, is a wonder, a miracle.

To bee a *Lot* in *Sodome*, to bee an *Abraham* in *Chaldea*, to bee a *Daniel* in *Babylon*, to bee a *Nehemiah* in *Damasco*, and to bee a *Job* in the Land of *Husse*, is to bee a Saint among

mong Devils, and ſuch a one the man in the Text was.

The Poets affirm, that *Venus* never appeared ſo beautious as when ſhee ſate by black *Vulcans* ſide, Gracious ſouls ſhine moſt clear when they be ſet by black-conditined perſons. *Stephens* face never ſhin'd ſo Angelically, ſo gloriouſly (in the Church) where all were virtuous, as before the Council, where all were vicious and malicious. So *Abijah* was a bright Star, a ſhining Sun in *Jerobaams* Court, which for prophaneneſs and wickedneſs, was a very hell.

The words that I have choſen to inſiſt upon, will afford us ſeveral obſervations, but I ſhall only name one, which I intend to proſecute at this time, and that is this, *viz.*

CHAP. I.

Doct. *That it is a very deſirable and commendable thing for young men to be really good betimes.*

Other

OTher Scriptures speak out this to bee a truth, besides what you have in the Text to confirm it, as that of the second of *Chronicles.* Chap. 34. 1, 2, 3. verses. *Josiah* was eight years old when hee began to reign, and hee reigned in *Jerusalem* one and thirty years. And hee did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the waies of *David* his Father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left; for in the eighth year of his reign, while hee was yet young, hee began to seek after the God of *David* his Father: and in the twelfth year, hee began to purge *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, from the high places, and the Groves, and the carved Images, and the Molten Images. 'Twas *Obadiah*'s honour, that hee feared the Lord from his youth. And *Timothies* Crown, that hee knew the Scripture from a Childe; and *Johns* Joy, that hee found Children walking in the truth;

Job 32. 4, 5, 6, 7

1 King. 18. 12.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

3 Epist. 4. v.

truth; this revived his good old heart, and made it dance for joy in his bosome: to spend further time in the proving of this truth, would be but to light Candles, to see the Sun at Noon.

The grounds and Reasons of this point, *viz.*

That it is a very desirable and commendable thing for young men to be really good betimes; are these that follow.

Deut. 6. 5. ch. 11. 13. *Augustine* beginneth one of his Sermons thus (*Ad vos mihi Sermo, O juvenes, flos ætatis, periculum mentis. August. de tempore Serm. 246.* To you is my speech O young men, the flower of age, the danger of the mind.)

Reason I.

First, Because the Lord commands it; and divine Commands are not to be disputed, but obeyed. In the 12 Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, and the 1 verse, *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them*: Remember now; I say now: now is an atome, it will puzzle the wisdome of a Philosopher, the skill of an Angel, to divide: Now is a Monosyllable in all Learned Languages.

Remem-

Remember now thy Creator: Remember him presently, instantly, for thou dost not know what a day, what an hour may bring forth; thou canst not tell what deadly sin, what deadly temptation, what deadly judgement may over-take thee; if thou dost not now, even now *remember thy Creator.*

Remember now thy Creator: Remember to know him, remember to love him, remember to desire him, remember to delight in him, remember to depend upon him, remember to get an interest in him, remember to live to him, and remember to walke with him. *Remember now thy Creator*, the Hebrew is *Creatours*, Father, Sonne, and Spirit. To the making of man, a Council was called in Heaven, in the first of *Genesis*, and 29 verse. *Remember thy Creatours*, remember the Father, so as to know him, so as to bee inwardly acquainted with him. Remember the Son, so as to believe in him, so as to rest upon him,

him so as to embrace him, and so as to make a compleat resignation of thy self to him. Remember the Spirit, so as to hear his voice, so as to obey his voyce, so as to feel his presence, and so as to experience his influence, &c.

Remember now thy Creator in the daies of thy youth; he doth not say, in the time of thy youth, but *in the daies of thy youth*, to note, that our life is but a few daies; 'tis but a vapour, a span, a flower, a shadow, a dream; and therefore *Seneca* saith well, *that though death bee before the Old mans face, yet hee may bee as near the Young mans back, &c.*

Aug. l. 1. Confess.

Mans life is the shadow of smoak, the dream of a shadow; one doubteth whether to call it a dying life, or a living death.

Ah! Young men, God commands you to bee good betimes. Remember, young men, that it is a dangerous thing to neglect one of his Commands, who by another is able to com-

mand

mand you into nothing, or into Hell. To act or run cross to Gods express Command (though under pretence of Revelation from God) is as much as a mans life is worth, as you may see in that sad Story, 1 *King*, 13. 24. *Vers.* &c.

Let young men put all their carnal Reasons, though never so many and weighty, into one scale, and Gods absolute Command in the other, and then write *Tekel* upon all their reasons; they are weighed in the ballance, and found too light.

Ah Sirs! what God commands must bee put in speedy execution, without denying, or delaying, or disputing the difficulties that attend it. Most young men in these daies doe as the Heathens, when their gods called for a man, they offered a Candle; or as *Hercules* offered up a painted man instead of a living. When God calls upon young men to serve him with the Primrose of their youth, they usually put him off till

Obedientia non discutit Dei mandata, sed facit. Prosper.

till they are overtaken with trembling joynts, dazled eyes, fainting hearts, failing hands, and feeble knees, but this will be bitterness in the end, &c.

Reason II.

Young men must bee really good betimes.

Because they have means and opportunities of being good betimes.

Never had men better means, and greater opportunities of being good, of doing good, and of receiving good than now. Ah Lord! how knowing, how beleeving, how holy, how heavenly, how humble might young men bee, were they not wanting to their owne souls? Young men might bee good, very good, yea eminently good, would they but improve the means of grace, the tenders of mercy, and the knockings of Christ by his Word, Works, and Spirit.

Erasmus. The Antients painted Opportunity with a hairy fore-head, but bald behinde, to signifie, that while a man hath opportunity before him

him, he may lay hold on it, but if he ſuffer it to ſlip away, he cannot pull it back again.

How many young men are now in everlaſting chains, who would give ten thouſand Worlds, (had they ſo many in their hands to give) to enjoy but one opportunity to hear one Sermon more, to make one Prayer more, to keep one Sabbath more, but cannot? this is their Hell, their Torment, this is the Scorpion that is ſtill biting, this is the Worm that is alwayes gnawing. Woe, woe, to us, that wee have neglected and trifled away thoſe golden opportunities that once wee had to get our ſins pardoned, our natures changed, our hearts bettered, our conſciences purged, and our ſouls ſaved, &c. * I have read of a King, who having no iſſue to ſucceed him, eſpying one day a well-favoured youth, took him to Court, and committed him to Tutors, to inſtruct him, providing by his will, that if hee pro-

* Bellarm. In concione de cruciatibus Gehennæ.

ed fit for government, hee ſhould bee crowned King, if not, hee ſhould bee bound in chains, and made a Gally-ſlave. Now when hee grew to years, the Kings executors perceiving that hee had ſadly neglected thoſe meanes and opportunities, whereby hee might have been fit for State-Government, called him before them, and declared the Kings will and pleaſure concerning him, which was accordingly performed, for they cauſed him to be fettered, and committed to the Gallies. Now what tongue can expreſſe how much hee was affected and afflicted, with his ſad and miſerable ſtate, eſpecially when hee conſidered with himſelf, that now hee is chained, who might have walked at liberty; Now hee is a ſlave, who might have been a King; now hee is over-ruled by Turks, who might once have ruled over Chriſtians? The Application is eaſie.

Ah!

Ah! young men, young men, shall Satan take all opportunities to tempt you? Shall the World take all opportunities to allure you? shall wicked men take all opportunities to insnare you, and to undo you? and shall Christian friends take all opportunities to better you? and shall Gods faithfull Messengers take all opportunities to save you? and will you? *will you neglect so great salvation?* *Plutarch* writes of *Hannibal*, that when hee could have taken *Rome*, hee would not, and when hee would have taken *Rome*, hee could not. Many in their youthful dayes, when they might have Mercy, Christ, Pardon, Heaven, they will not, and in old age, when they would have Christ, Pardon, Peace, Heaven, they cannot, they may not. God seemes to say, as *Thesius* said once, Go, saies hee, and tell *Creon*, *Thesius* offers thee a gracious offer, Yet I am pleased to bee friends, if thou wilt submit (this is my first mes-

'Tis storied of *Charles*, King of *Sicily* and *Jerusalem*, that hee was called *Carolus Cunctator*, *Charls* the lingerer; this age affords many such lingerers, &c.

meſſage) but if this offer prevail not, look for mee to bee up in arms.

Reaſon III.

Becauſe when they have fewer and leſſer ſins to anſwer for, and repent of, multitudes of ſins and ſorrows are prevented by being good betimes.

Why young men ſhould be really good betimes. Lord, ſaith *Auſtin*, I have loved thee late, the greater was his ſins, and the more were his ſorrows.

The more wee number our daies, the fewer ſins wee ſhall have to number. As a Copy is then ſafeſt from blotting, when duſt is put upon it; ſo are wee from ſinning, when (in the time of our youth) wee remember that wee are but duſt. The tears of young penitents do more ſcorch the Devils, than all the flames of Hell, for hereby all their hopes are blaſted, and the great underminer countermined, and blown up. *Mane* is the Devils Verb, hee bids tarry, time enough to repent; but *Mane* is Gods Adverb, hee bids repent early, in the morning of thy youth; for then thy ſins will bee

fewer,

fewer, and leſſer. VVell, young men, remember this; He that will not at the firſt hand buy good counſel cheap, ſhall at the ſecond hand buy repentance over dear.

Ah! young men, young men, if you doe not begin to bee good betimes, thoſe ſins that are now as Jewels ſparkling in your eyes, will at laſt bee Mil-ſtones about your necks, to ſink you for ever. — Among many things that *Beza* in his laſt Will and Teſtament, gave God thanks for, this was the firſt and chief, that hee at the age of ſixteen years, had called him to the knowledge of the truth, and ſo prevented many ſins and ſorrows that otherwiſe would have overtaken him, and have made his life leſs happy, and more miſerable. Young Saints often prove old Angels, but old Sinners ſeldome prove good Saints, &c.

Pſal. 25. 7
Job 13. 26

There is nothing puts a more ſerious frame into a mans ſpirit, than to know the worth of his time.

Reaſon IV.

Becauſe time is a peeciom Talent that young men muſt bee

Why young men ſhould be really good betimes.

countable for. The ſooner they begin to bee good, the more eaſie will bee their accounts, eſpecially as to that great Talent of time. *Cato* and other Heathens held, that account muſt bee given, not onely of our labour, but alſo of our leiſure; at the great day it will appear, that they that have ſpent their time in mourning, have done better than they that have ſpent their time in dancing; and they that have ſpent many dayes in humiliation, than they that have ſpent many dayes in idle recreations.

I have read of a devout man, who when hee heard a clock ſtrike, hee would ſay, here is one hour more paſt that I have to anſwer for. Ah! young men, as time is very precious, ſo it is very ſhort, time is very ſwift, it is ſuddenly gone, in the ninth of *Job*, and the 25th. *verſe. My daies are ſwifter than a Poſt, they flee away, they ſee no good.* The Hebrew word (*Kalal*) tranſlated *ſwifter*

than

than a Post, signifies any thing that is light, because light things are quick in motion.

The Antients emblem'd time with wings, as it were, not running, but flying. Time is like the Sun, that never stands still, but is still a running his race; the Sun did once stand still, yea went back, but so did never Time. Time is still running and flying; it is a bubble, a shadow, a dream; can you seriously consider of this, young men, and not *begin to bee good betimes*? Surely you cannot. Sirs, if the whole earth whereupon wee tread, were turned into a lump of Gold, it were not able to purchase one minute of time. Oh the regreetings of the Damned, for mis-spending precious time! Oh what would they not give to bee free, and to enjoy the means of grace one hour! Ah with what attention! with what intention! with what trembling and melting of heart! with what hungring and thirsting would they hear the word!

Sophocles. Phocilides.

Who is there among us that knows how to value time, and prize a day at a due rate? *Sen. Epi.*

Word! Time (ſaith *Bernard*) were a good commodity in Hell, and the traffick of it moſt gainful, where, for one day a man would give ten thouſand worlds, if he had them; young men, can you in good earneſt beleeve this, and not begin to be good betimes?

A Heathen ſaid, He lived no day without a line, that is, he did ſomething remarkable every day.

Ah! young men and women, as you love your precious immortal ſouls, as you would eſcape Hell, and come to Heaven, as you would be happy in Life, and bleſſed in Death, and glorious after Death; don't ſpend any more of your precious time, in drinking and drabbing, in carding, dicing, and dancing; don't trifle away your time; don't ſweer away your time, don't VVhore away your time, doe not lye away your time, but begin to bee good betimes, becauſe Time is a Talent, that God will reckon with you for: Ah! young men and women, you may reckon upon years, many years yet to come, when poſſibly you have not

not ſo many hours to make ready your accompts, it may bee this night you may have a ſummons, and then if your time be done, and your work to bee begun, in what a ſad caſe will you be, will you not wiſh that you had never been born?

Seneca was wont to jeer the *Jews* for their ill husbandry, in that they loſt one day in ſeven; meaning their Sabbath; O that it were not too true of the moſt of Profeſſors, both young and old, that they loſe not only one day in ſeven, but ſeveral daies in ſeven.

Sirs! Time let ſlip cannot bee recalled, the fooliſh Virgins found it ſo, and *Saul* found it ſo, and *Herod* found it ſo, and *Nero* found it ſo; the *Iſraelites* found it ſo, yea and *Jacob*, and *Joſiah*, and *David*, (though good men) yet they found it ſo to their coſt. Mat. 25. 5 Judg. 3. 23 Heb. 3. 17, 18, 19

The *Ægyptians* draw the Picture of Time with three Heads, the firſt of a greedy VVolf, gaping, for time paſt, becauſe it hath rave-

ravenously devoured the memory of so many things past recalling. The

Second of a crowned Lion, roaring, for time present, because it hath the principality of all actions, for which it calls loud. The

Third of a Deceitful Dogge, fawning, for time to come, because it feeds some men with many flattering hopes to their eternal undoing: Ah! young men and women, as you would give up your accounts at last with joy, concerning this talent of time, with which God hath trusted you, *begin to bee good betimes*, &c.

Why young men should be really good betimes.

Seneca (though a Heathen) could say, beleeve mee, true joy is no light thing.

Reason 5.

Because they will have the greater comfort and joy when they come to bee old.

The 71. *Psalm* 5. 17, 18. compared. *Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth. O God thou hast taught*

me

me from my youth, and hitherto I have declared thy wondrous works; Now alſo when I am old and gray-headed, O God forſake me not, until I have ſhewed thy ſtrength unto this Generation, and thy power unto every one that is to come.

Polycarpus could ſay, when old, Thus many years have I ſerved my Maſter Chriſt, and hitherto hath hee dealt well with mee; if early converts live to bee old, no joy to their joy, their joy will bee the greateſt joy, a joy like to the joy of Harveſt, a joy like to their joy that divide the ſpoyl; their joy will bee the ſoundeſt joy, the weightieſt joy, the holieſt joy, the pureſt joy, the ſtrongeſt joy, and the moſt laſting joy; the Carnal joy of the wicked, the gliſtering (golden) joy of the worldling, and the flaſhing joy of the Hypocrite, is but as the crackling of thorns under a pot, to the joy and comfort of ſuch, who when old, can ſay with good *Obadiah*, *that they feared the Lord* Iſa. 9. 3

from

from their youth. If when you are young, your eyes shall bee full of tears (for sin) when you are old, your heart shall bee full of joyes. Such shall have the best VVine at last.

Oh! *That young men would begin to be good betimes,* that so they may have the greater harvest of joy, when they come to bee old, &c. 'tis sad to bee sowing your seed, when you should be reaping your harvest; 'tis best to gather in the Summer of youth, against the VVinter of old age,

Why young men should be really good betimes. Luk. 10. 25

Reason VI.

Because an eternity of felicity and glory, hangs upon those few moments that are allotted to them.

It was a good question the young man proposed, *What shall I doe to inherit eternal life?* I know I shall bee eternally happy, or eternally miserable, eternally blest, or eternally curst, eternally saved, or eternally damned, &c.

O what shall I do to inherit eternal life! my cares, my fears, my troubles are all about eternity, no time can reach eternity, no age can extend to eternity, no tongue can expresse eternity. Eternity is that (*unum perpetuum hodie*) one perpetual day which shall never have end; what shall I doe, what shall I not doe, that I may be happy to all eternity?

I am now young, and in the flower of my daies; but who knows what a day may bring forth? the greatest weight hangs upon the smallest wyers, an eternity depends upon those few hours, I am to breath in this world; O what cause have I therefore to bee good betimes, to know God betimes, to beleeve betimes, to repent betimes, to get my peace made, and my pardon sealed betimes, to get my nature changed, my Conscience purged, and my interest in Christ cleared betimes, before eternity overtakes mee, before my Glass bee out, my

Æternitas est semper & immutabile esse. The old *Romans* were out, that thought Eternity dwelt in Statues, and in Marble Monuments.

my Sun ſet, my race run, leſt the dark night of eternity ſhould overtake me, and I made miſerable for ever.

I have read of one (*Myrgenes*) who when great gifts were ſent unto him, hee ſent them all back again, ſaying, I only deſire this one thing at your Maſters hand; to pray for me, that I may bee ſaved for eternity. O that all young men and women, who make earth their Heaven, Pleaſures their Paradiſe, that eat the fat, and drink the ſweet, that cloathe themſelves richly, and crown their heads with Roſe-buds, that they would ſeriouſly conſider of Eternity, ſo as to hear as for eternity, and pray as for eternity, and live as for eternity, and provide as for eternity! That they may ſay with that famous Painter *Zeuxes*, (*Æternitati pingo*) I paint for eternity; we doe all for eternity, we beleeve for eternity, we repent for eternity, we obey for eternity, &c.

Luk. 15. 19, 20.

O that you would not make

thoſe

thoſe things eternal for puniſhment, that cannot bee eternal for uſe.

Cur ea quæ ad uſum diuturna eſſe non poſſunt, ad ſupplicium diuturna depoſcet? Ambroſe in Luk. 4. *T.* 5.

Ah! young men and women, God calls, and the bloud of Jeſus Chriſt calls, and the Spirit of Chriſt in the Goſpel calls, and the rage of Satan calls, and your ſad ſtate and condition calls, and the happineſs and bleſſedneſs of glorified Saints calls; theſe all call aloud upon you to make ſure a glorious eternity, before you ſail out into that dreadful Ocean. All your eternal good depends upon the ſhort and uncertain moments of your Lives; and if the threed of your Lives ſhould bee cut, before a happy eternity is made ſure, woe to you that ever you were born; Doe not ſay, O young man, that thou art young, and hereafter will bee time enough to provide for eternity, for eternity may bee at the door, ready to carry thee away for ever. Every daies experience ſpeaks out eternity to bee as neer the young mans back, as

as 'tis before the Old mans face.

O grasp to day the Diadem of a blessed eternity, lest thou art cut off before the morning comes! though there is but one way to come into this World, yet there is a thousand thousand wayes to bee sent out of this world; Well young men and women, remember this, as the motions of the soul are quick, so are the motions of Divine Justice quick also; and if you will not hear the voice of God to day, if you will not provide for eternity to day, God may swear to morrow that you shall never enter into his rest; it is a very sad and dangerous thing to trifle and dally with God, his Word, his offers, our own souls and eternity: Therefore let all young people labour to bee good betimes, and not to let him, that is goodness it self, alone, till hee hath made them good, till hee hath given them those hopes of eternity that will both make them good, and keep them

Heb. 3. 7, 8, 15, 16, 18, 19

good,

good; that will make them happy, and keep them happy: and that for ever; if all this will not do, then know, that ere long those fears of eternity of misery, that beget that monster, Despair, which like *Medusa's* head, astonisheth with its very aspect, and strangles hope, which is the breath of the soul, will certainly overtake you; as it is said, *Dum Spiro, Spero*, so it may bee inverted: *Dum Spero, Spiro*, other miseries may wound the spirit, but Despair kills it dead; my prayer shall bee, that none of you may ever experience this sad truth, but that you may all bee good in good earnest betimes, which will yeeld you two Heavens, a Heaven on Earth, and a Heaven after death.

Reason VII.

Why young persons should be really good betimes.

Because they doe not begin to live, till they begin to be really good.

Till they begin to be good, they

are dead God-wards and Christ-wards, and Heaven-wards, and Holineſſe-wards; till a man begins to bee really good, hee is really dead, *Philippians* 2. 1. and that firſt in reſpect of working, his works are called dead works, *Hebrewes* 9. 14. the moſt gliſtering ſervices of unregenerate perſons, are but dead works, becauſe they proceed not from a principle of life, and they lead to death, *Rom.* 6. 21. and leave a ſentence of death upon the ſoul, till it be waſhed off by the blood of the Lamb.

Reſpectu operis.

Reſpectu honoris.

Secondly, Hee is dead, in reſpect of honour, hee is dead to all priviledges, hee is not fit to inherit mercy; Who will ſet the Crown of Life upon a dead man? The Crowne of Life is onely for living Chriſtians, *Revelations* 2. 10. The young Prodigal was dead, till hee begun to bee good, till hee begun to remember his Fathers houſe, and to reſolve to return home. *My Sonne was dead, but is alive,*

Luke 15. 24.

alive, and the Widow that liveth in pleasure, is dead while shee liveth.

1 Tim. 5. 6 As it is a reproach to an old man to bee in Coats, so tis a disgrace to bee an old babe, i.e. to be but a babe in grace, when old in years. Heb. 5. 12, 13, 14.

When *Josaphat* asked *Barlaam*, how old hee was? hee answered, five and forty yeats old, to whom *Josaphat* replied, thou seemest to bee seventy; true saith hee, if you reckon ever since I was born; but I count not those yeares which were spent in vanity.

Ah Sirs! you never begin to live, till you begin to bee good in good earnest. There is the life of Vegetation, and that is the life of plants: Secondly, there is the life of Sense, and that is the life of beasts; Thirdly, there is the life of Reason, and that is the life of man; Fourthly, there is the life of Grace, and that is the life of Saints; and this life you do not begin to live, till you begin to bee good: If a living Dogge is better than a dead Lion, as the Wise man speaks, and if a Fly is more excellent than the Heavens, because the Fly

Eccl. 9. 4.

hath life, which the Heavens have not, as the Philoſopher ſaith; what a ſad, dead, poor nothing is that perſon, that is a ſtranger to the life of grace and goodneſs, that is dead even whilſt he is alive?

Mæcenas in *Seneca* had rather live in many diſeaſes, than dye. And *Homer* reporteth of his *Achilles*, that hee had rather be a ſervant to a poor Country clown here, than to be a King to all the ſouls departed.

Moſt men will bleed, ſweat, vomit, purge, part with an eſtate, yea with a limb, I limbs, yea, and many a better thing, (*viz.* the honour of God, and a good conſcience) to preſerve their natural lives: as hee cries out, Give mee any deformity, any torment, any miſery, ſo you ſpare my life; and yet how few, how very few are to bee found, who make it their work, their buſineſſe, to attain to a life of goodneſſe, or to begin to bee good betimes, or to bee dead to the world, and alive to God, rather than to bee dead to God, and alive to the world? this is for a lamentation, and ſhall be for a lamentation, that natural life is ſo highly prized, and ſpiritual life ſo little regarded, &c.

Reaſon

Reason VIII.

Because the promise of finding God, of enjoying God, is made over to an early seeking of God.

Why young persons should bee really good betimes.

Prov 8.17. *I love them that love mee, and they that seek mee early, shall finde mee.* Or as the Hebrew hath it, they that seek mee in the morning, shall finde mee. By the benefit of the morning light we come to finde the things wee seek. *Shahhar* signifies to seek inquisitively, to seek diligently, to seek timely in the morning. As the *Israelites* went early in the morning to seek for Manna. And as Students rise early in the morning, and sit close to it, to get knowledge; so saith Wisdome, *They that seek mee in the spring and morning of their youth, shall finde mee.*

שחר Exod. 16. 21.

Scipio went first to the Capitol, and then to the Senate. *Tully*, an Heathen, frequently called God *Optimum maximum*, the best and greatest. God is *omnis super omnia.*

Now to seek the Lord early, is to seek the Lord firstly. God hath in himself all the good of Angels, of men, and universal nature; hee hath all glories, all dignities, all riches, all treasures.

all pleasures, all comforts, all delights, all joyes, all beatitudes. God is that one infinite Perfection in himself, which is eminently and virtually all perfections of the creatures, and therefore hee is firstly to be sought. Abstracts do better expresse him, than Concretes and Adjectives; he is, being, bonity, power, wisdome, justice, mercy, goodnesse, and love it self, and therefore worthy to be sought before all other things. Seek yee first the good things of the minde, saith *Philosophy*, and doth not Divinity say as much?

Cicero.

Again, To seek early, is to seek opportunely, to seek while the opportunity does present, *Judg.9.33. Thou shalt rise early, and set upon the City*, that is, thou shalt opportunely set upon the City.

Daies of grace have their dates therefore take heed of saying, *Cras, Cras*, to morrow to morrow

Such there have been, who by giving a glasse of water opportunely, have obtained a Kingdome, as you may see in the story of *Themistus*, and King *Agrippa*.

Ah!

Ah! Young Men and Women, you do not know, but that by an early, by an opportune ſeeking of God, you may obtain a Kingdome that ſhakes not, and Glory that paſſeth not away. Heb. 12. 28.

There is a ſeaſon wherein God may be found, *Seek yee the Lord while hee may bee found, call yee upon him, while hee is neer*; and if you ſlip this ſeaſon, you may ſeek him, and miſs him. *Though they cry unto mee, I will not hearken unto them; when yee make many Prayers, I will not hear. Then ſhall they cry unto the Lord, but hee will not hear. Then ſhall they call upon mee, but I will not anſwer, they ſhall ſeek me early, but ſhall not finde mee.* This was *Sauls* miſery; *The Philiſtines are upon mee, and God will not anſwer mee*; 'tis juſtice that they ſhould ſeek, and not finde at laſt, who might have found, had they but ſought ſeaſonably and opportunely, &c. Isa. 55. 6. Jer. 11. 11. Isa. 1. 15. Mic. 3. 4. Prov. 1. 28

Again, to ſeek early, is to ſeek earneſtly, affectionately. *With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, yea with my ſpirit within mee will I ſeek thee early:* The Hebrew word ſignifies both an earneſt, and an early ſeeking; in the morning, the ſpirits are up, and men are earneſt, lively, and affectionate.

Isa. 26. 9.

An! ſuch a ſeeking ſhall certainly be crowned with finding: *My voice ſhalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct* (Hebrew, martial) *my prayer unto thee, and will look up,* (Hebrew, look out like a watch-man) *Let all thoſe that put their truſt in thee rejoyce, let them ever ſhout for joy; becauſe thou defendeſt them* (Hebrew, thou covereſt over, or protecteſt them) *Let them alſo that love thy Name, bee joyfull in thee: for thou, Lord, wilt bleſs the righteous, with favour wilt thou compaſſe him* (Hebrew crown him) *as with a ſhield.* None have ever thus ſought the Lord, but they have, or certainly ſhall finde

Psal. 5. 3. 11. 12. אערך ואצפה

finde him. *Seek and yee ſhall finde*, Matth. 7. 7. *your hearts ſhall live that ſeek God*, Pſalme 69. 32. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*; James 5. 16. or as the Greek hath it, *The working praier of a righteous man availeth much*; that prayer that ſets the whole man a work, will work wonders in Heaven, in the heart, and in the earth. Earneſt prayer, like *Sauls* ſword, and *Jonathans* bow, never returns empty.

ἐνεργου-μένη. It ſignifies ſuch a working as notes the livelieſt activity that can be.

One ſpeaking of *Luther*, who was a man verie earneſt in praier, ſaid, (*hic homo potuit apud Deum quod voluit*) this man could have what hee would of God, &c.

Again, to ſeek early, is to ſeek chiefly, primarily, after this or that thing; what wee firſt ſeek, wee ſeek as chief. Now to ſeek the Lord early, is to ſeek him primarily, chiefly, in the 63 *Pſalme*, and the 1 *verſe*, *Thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee*, that is, I will ſeek thee, as my choiceſt, and my

Omne bonum in ſumme bono.

my chiefest good. God is *Alpha*, the fountain from whence all grace springs, and *Omega* the Sea, to which all glory runs, and therefore early and primarily to bee sought. God is a perfect good, a solid good (*id bonum perfectum dicitur, cui nil accedere, solidum, cui nil decedere potest. Lactantius*) that is a perfect good, to which nothing can be added, that a solid, from which nothing can be spared; such a good God is, and therefore early and chiefly to bee sought. God is a pure and simple good, hee is a light, in whom there is no darkness, a good in whom there is no evil. The goodnesse of the Creature is mixt, yea, that little goodnesse that is in the Creature is mixt with much evil, but God is an immixt good, hee is a good, hee is a pure good, hee is all over good, he is nothing but good. God is an All-sufficient good, *walk before mee, and bee upright, I am God All-sufficient*, in the 17. of *Genesis*, and the 1 verse. *Habet omnia, qui habet*

1 Joh. 1. 5.

Quicquid est in Deo, est ipse Deus.

habet habentem omnia. Aug. Hee hath all, that hath the haver of all. God hath in himselfe all power to defend you, all wisdome to direct you, all mercy to pardon you, all grace to inrich you, all righteousnesse to cloathe you, all goodnesse to supply you, and all happinesse to Crown you. God is a satisfying good, a good that fills the heart, and quiets the soul, in the 33. of *Genesis*, and the 11. *verse. I have enough*, saith good *Jacob*, *I have all*, saith *Jacob*, for so the Hebrew hath it (*Cholli*) I have all, I have all comforts, all delights, all contents, &c. In having nothing, I have all things, because I have Christ, having therefore all things in him, I seek no other reward, for *hee is the universal reward*, saith one. As the worth and value of of many peeces of silver is to bee found in one peece of gold. So all the petty excellencies that are scattered abroad in the creatures, are to bee found in God, yea all the whole Cant. 2. 3.

whole Volume of Perfections, which is ſpread through Heaven and Earth, is epitomized in him. No good, below him that is the greateſt good, can ſatisfie the ſoul; a good wife, a good childe, a good name, a good eſtate, a good friend, cannot ſatisfie the ſoul; theſe may pleaſe, but they cannot ſatisfie. All abundance, if it bee not my God, is to mee nothing but povertie and want, ſaid one.

Omnis copia quæ non eſt Deus meus, mihi egeſtas eſt. Aug. Soliloq c. 13.

Ah! that young men and women would in the morning of their youth, ſeek, yea, ſeek early, ſeek earneſtly, ſeek affectionately, ſeek diligently, ſeek primarily, and ſeek unweariedly this God, who is the greateſt good, the beſt good, the moſt deſirable good; who is a ſuitable good, a pure good, a ſatisfying good, a total good, and an eternal good.

Why young perſons ſhould be really good betimes.

Reaſon IX.

Becauſe the time of youth is the choiceſt and fitteſt time for ſervice.

Now

Now your parts are lively, ſenſes freſh, memory ſtrong, and nature vigorous, the daies of your youth, are the ſpring and morning of your time, they are the firſt-born of your ſtrength, therefore God requires your non-age, as well as your dotage, the Wine of your times, as well as the Lees, as you may ſee typified to you in the firſt fruits, which were dedicated to the Lord, and the firſt-born. The time of youth, is the time of ſalvation, it is the acceptable time, it is thy ſummer, thy harveſt time. O young man! therefore do not ſleep, but up and bee doing, awaken thy heart, rouſe up thy ſoul, and improve all thou haſt, put out thy reaſon, thy ſtrength, thy all, to the treaſuring up of heavenly graces, precious promiſes, divine experiences, and ſpiritual comforts, againſt the Winter of old age; and then old age will not bee to thee an evil age, but as it was to *Abraham*, *a good old age*; doe not put off God with fair

The daies of youth are called, *ætas bona*, *in Cicero*, and *ætas optima*, *in Seneca*.

Exod. 13. 2.

Exod. 22. 9.

Gen. 25. 28.

fair promises and large pretences, till your last sands are running, and the daies of dotage have overtaken you. That's a sad word of the Prophet, *Cursed bee the deceiver, which hath in his Flock a Male, and yet offereth to the Lord a corrupt thing.*

Mal. 1.14.

Ah young men and women, who are like the Almond Tree, you have many males in the Flock, your strength is a male in your Flock, your time is a male in the Flock, your reason is a male in the Flock, your parts are a male in the Flock, and your gifts are a male in the Flock; now if hee be curst that hath but one male in his Flock, and shall offer to God a corrupt thing, a thing of no worth, of no value, how will you bee curst, and curst? curst at home, and curst abroad, curst Temporally, curst Spiritually, and curst Eternally, who have many males in your Flock, and yet deal so unworthily, so fraudulently, and false-heartedly with God, as to put him off with the dreggs of your

Jer. 1.11. The Almond tree blossomes in *January* (while it is yet winter) and the fruit is ripe in *March*.

your time and ſtrength, while you ſpend the Primroſe of your youth in the ſervice of the world, the Fleſh, and the Devil. Mat. 21. 29.

The Fig-tree in the Goſpel, that did not bring forth fruit timely and ſeaſonably, was curſt to admiration; the time of youth is the time and ſeaſon for bringing forth the fruits of Righteouſneſſe and Holineſſe, and if theſe fruits bee not brought forth in their ſeaſon, you may juſtly fear, that the curſes of Heaven will ſecretly and inſenſibly ſoak and ſink into your ſouls, and then woe, woe to you that ever you were born; the beſt way to prevent this Hell of Hells, is to give God the cream and flower of your youth, your ſtrength, your time, your talents; veſſels that are betimes ſeaſoned with the ſavour of life, never loſe it, *Prov.* 22.6.

Why young perſons ſhould bee really good, (in good earneſt) betimes.

Reaſon X.

Becauſe death may ſuddenly and un-

unexpectedly seize upon you, you have no lease of your lives.

Pares nascuntur, pares moriuntur, in the womb and in the tomb they are all alike. Job 21. 23, 24. 'Tis an allegorical description of the highest prosperity.

Youth is as fickle as old age, the young man may finde Graves enough of his length in burial places; as green Wood, and old loggs meet in one fire, so young sinners and old sinners meet (in one Hell) and burn together; when the young man is in his spring and prime, then he is cut off, and dies; one dyeth in his full strength (or in the strength of his perfection, as the Hebrew hath it) being wholly at ease and quiet. His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moystened with marrow. *Davids* children dyed when young, so did *Jobs*, and *Jeroboams*, &c. Every daies experience tells us, that the young mans life is as much a vapour, as the old mans is.

I have read of an *Italian* Poet, who brings in a proper young man, rich and potent, discoursing with Death in the habit of a Mower, with his Sythe in his hand,

hand, cutting down the life of man (*For all fleſh is graſs*, Iſa. 40. 6.) and wilt thou not ſpare any mans perſon, ſaith the young man? I ſpare none, ſaith Death; mans life is but a day, a ſhort day, a winters day, oft-times the Sun goes down upon a man, before it be well up; your day is ſhort, your work is great, your journey long, and therefore you ſhould riſe early, and ſet forward towards Heaven betimes, as that man doth that hath a long journey to goe in a winters day.

Deaths motto is, *Nulli cedo*, I yeeld to none.

The life of man is abſolutely ſhort. *Behold, thou haſt made my dayes as an handsbreadth.* The life of man is comparatively ſhort, and that if you compare mans life now to what hee might have reacht, had hee continued in innocency. Sin brought in Death, Death is a fall: that came in by a fall; or if you compare mans life now, to what they did reach to before the Flood, then ſeveral lived, ſix, ſeven, eight, nine hun-

Pſal. 39. 5

Gen. 9.

Pſal. 39. 5

dred years; or if you compare mens daies with the daies of God, *Mine age is as nothing before thee*; or if you compare the daies of man, to the daies of Eternity.

The Heathen could ſay, that the whole life of man ſhould be nothing elſe but (*Meditatio mortis*) a meditation of death.

Ah! Young men, Young men, can you ſeriouſly conſider of the brevity of mans life, and trifle away your time, the offers of grace, your precious ſouls, and eternity? &c. ſurely you cannot, ſurely you dare not; if you do but in good earneſt ponder upon the ſhortneſs of mans life. It is recorded of *Philip* King of *Macedon*, that he gave a penſion to one, to come to him every day at dinner, and to cry to him (*Memento te eſſe mortalem*), remember thou art but mortal.

Ah! Young men and Old had need bee often put in minde of their mortality, they are too apt to forget that day, yea, to put farre from them the thoughts of that day. I have read of three that could not endure to hear that bit-

ter

ter word, death, mentioned in their ears, and ſurely this age is full of ſuch monſters.

And as the life of man is very ſhort, ſo it is very uncertain, now well, now ſick, alive this hour, and dead the next. Death doth not alwaies give warning before hand, ſometimes hee gives the mortal blow ſuddenly, he comes behinde with his dart, and ſtrikes a man at the heart, before hee ſaith, *Have I found thee, O mine enemy? Entichus* fell down dead ſuddenly, *Act.* 20. 19. Death ſuddenly arreſted *Davids* Sons, and *Jobs* Sons, *Auguſtus* dyed in a Complement, *Galba*, with a Sentence, *Veſpatian*, with a Jeſt, *Zeuxes* dyed laughing at the picture of an old VVoman, which hee drew with his owne hand, *Sophocles* was choaked with the ſtone in a Grape, *Diodorus* the Logician died for ſhame, that hee could not anſwer a joculary queſtion propounded at the Table by *Stilpo*, *Joannes Meaſius*, preaching upon the raiſing of the woman

Petrarch telleth of one who being invited to dinner the next day, anſwered, *Ego à multis annis craſtinum non habui.* I have not had a morrow for this many years.

of *Naims* Sonne from the dead, within three hours after died himself.

Ah! Young men and women, have you not cauſe, great cauſe to bee good betimes? for Death is ſudden in his approaches, nothing more ſure than death, and nothing more uncertaine than life! therefore know the Lord betimes, turn from your ſins betimes, lay hold on the Lord, and make peace with him betimes, that you may never ſay, as *Cæſar Borgias* ſaid, when hee was ſick to death, When I lived (ſaid hee) I provided for every thing but Death, now I muſt dye, and am unprovided to dye, &c.

Reaſon XI.

Why young perſons ſhould bee really good, betimes.

Becauſe it is ten to one, nay, a hundred to ten, if ever they are converted, if they are not converted when they are young.

God

God usually begins with such betimes, that he hath had thoughts of love and mercy towards them from everlasting, the instances cited to prove the Doctrine, confirms this Argument, and if you look abroad in the world, you shall hardly finde one Saint among a thousand, but dates his conversion from the time of his Youth. 'Twas the young ones that got through the wilderness into *Canaan*. If the Tree do not bud, and blossome, and bring forth fruit in the Spring, it is commonly dead all the year after; if in the spring, and morning of your daies, you do not bring forth fruit to God, it is an hundred to one, that ever you bring forth fruit to him, when the evil daies of old age shall overtake you, wherein you shall say, you have no pleasure. For as the Sonne of *Syrach* observes, if thou hast gathered nothing in thy youth, what canst thou finde in thy age? 'tis rare, very rare, that God sows and reaps

Hos. 11. 1. When *Israel* was a childe, then I loved him, &c.

Numb. 26. 64. An Hebrew Doctor observes, that of those six hundred thousand that went out of *Egypt*, there were but two persons that entered *Canaan*. Eccl. 25. 5

in old age, uſually God ſows the ſeed of grace in youth, that yeelds the harveſt of joy in age.

Though true repentance bee never too late, yet late repentance is ſeldome true. Millions are now in Hell, who have pleaſed themſelves with the thoughts of after Repentance. The Lord hath made a promiſe to late repentance, but where hath he made a promiſe of late repentance. Yea, what can be more juſt and equal, that ſuch ſhould ſeek, and not finde, who might have found, but would not ſeek; and that he ſhould ſhut his ears againſt their late prayers, who have ſtopt their ears againſt his early calls? The Ancient Warriours would not accept an old man into their Army, as being unfit for ſervice, and do'ſt thou think that God will accept of thy dry bones, when Satan hath ſuck't out all the Marrow? What Lord, what Maſter, will take ſuch into their ſervice, who have all their daies ſerved their enemies?

Prov. 1. 24--32.

enemies? and will God, will God? The *Circaſſians* (a kinde of Mongrel Chriſtians) are ſaid to divide their life betwixt ſin and devotion, dedicating their youth to rapine, and their old age to repentance; if this bee thy caſe, I would not bee in thy caſe for ten thouſand worlds. *Breerw. Enqui.*

I have read of a certain great man, that was admoniſhed in his ſickneſſe to repent, who anſwered, that hee would not repent yet, for if he ſhould recover, his companions would laugh at him; but growing ſicker and ſicker, his friends preſſed him again to repent, but then he told them, that it was too late (*Quia jam judicatus ſum, & condemnatus*) for now, ſaid hee, I am judged and condemned. *Beda* hath this ſtory

Reaſon XII.

Becauſe elſe they will never attain to the honour of being old Diſciples. Why young men ſhould be really good betimes.

CHAP. II.

It is a very great honour to bee an Old Disciple.

NOw this honour none reach to, but such as are converted betimes, but such as turn to the Lord in the spring and morning of their youth: It is no honour for an old man to be in coats, nor for an old man to bee a babe in grace. An A. B. C. old man is a sad and shameful sight: O but it is a mighty honour to bee a man when hee is old, that he can date his conversion from the morning of his youth. Now that it is an honour to bee an old Disciple, I shall prove by an induction of particulars. As

What more ridiculous than (*puer centum annorum*) a childe of an hundred years old?

Particular I.

All men will honour an old Disciple, Prov. 16.31. *The hoary head is a Crown of glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousnesse.* God requires that the aged should be honoured,

A Crown is a very glorious thing, but there are but few of them.

noured, *Lev.*19.32. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man* (the old man here is by some expounded the wise man) *and fear thy God, I am the Lord.* Hoarinesse is onely honourable, when found in a way of righteousnesse, a white head accompanied with a holy heart, makes a man truly honourable. There are two glorious sights in the world, the one is, a young man walking in his uprightnesse; and the other is, an old man walking in waies of righteousnesse; 'twas *Abrahams* honour, that he went to his grave in a good old age; or rather, as the Hebrew hath it, with a good gray head; many there be that goe to their graves with a gray head; but this was *Abrahams* Crown, that he went to his grave with a good gray head; had *Abraham's* head been never so gray, if it had not been good, it would have been no honour to him; a hoary head, when coupled with an unsanctified heart, is rather a curse, than a blessing

Gen.25.8.

Isa. 65, 20. sing, when the head is as white as Snow, and the soul as black as hell; God usually gives up such to the greatest scorn and contempt. Princes are hanged up by their hands, the faces of Elders were not honoured, and this God had threatned long before. *The Lord shall bring against thee a Nation from far, a Nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young.*

Lam. 5. 12

Deut. 28. 49, 50.

I have read of *Cleanthes*, who was wont sometimes to chide himself; *Ariston* wondring thereat, asked him, whom chidest thou? *Cleanthes* laughed, & answered I chide an old fellow (*qui canos quidem habet, sed mentem non habet*) who hath gray hairs indeed, but wants understanding, and prudence worthy of them. The Application I will leave to the gray heads, and gray beards of our time, who have little else to commend them to the world, but their hoary heads, and snowy beards.

Parti-

Particular II.

God usually reveals himself most to old Disciples, to old Saints, Job 12. 12. *With the Antient is wisdome, and in length of daies understanding.* God usually manifests most of himself to aged Saints, they usually pray most, and pay most, they labour most, and long most after the choicest manifestations of himself, and of his grace; and therefore he opens his bosome most to them, and makes them of his Cabinet-Council, *Gen.* 18. 17, 19. *And the Lord said, shall I hide from* Abraham *that thing which I do, for I know him, that hee will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgement, that the Lord may bring upon* Abraham, *that which he hath spoken of him. Abraham* was an old friend; and therefore God makes him both of his Court and Council; wee usually open our hearts most freely, fully, and familiarly, to

בישישים In the antient is wisdome. *Valentinius* the Emperours motto was *amicus veterimus optimus*) an old friend is best.

to old friends. So doth God to his antient friends. Ah what a bleſſed ſight and enjoyment of Chriſt had old *Simeon*, that made his very heart to dance in him! *Now Lord, letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eies have ſeen thy ſalvation, &c.* I have ſeen him, who is my light, my life, my love, my joy, my crown, my heaven, my all; therefore now let *thy ſervant depart in peace.* So *Anna*, when ſhe was fourſcore and four years old, was ſo filled with the diſcoveries and injoyments of Chriſt, that ſhe could not but declare what ſhe had taſted, felt, ſeen, heard, and received from the Lord: She was ripe, and ready to diſcover the fulneſſe, ſweetneſſe, goodneſſe, excellency, and glory of that Chriſt, whom ſhe had long loved, feared, and ſerved. So *Paul* lived in the light, ſight, and ſweet injoyments of Chriſt, when aged, in years, in grace. So, when had *John* that glorious viſion of Chriſt among the

Luk. 2. 25, 26, 27, 28.

Verſe 36. 37, 38.

Phil. 4. 5. 7, 9.

Rev. 1. 7. --ult.

the golden Candlesticks, and those discoveries and manifestations of the ruine of *Rome*, the fall of Antichrist, the casting the beast, and false Prophet into a lake of fire, the conquest of the Kingdomes of the world, by Christs bow and sword, the binding up of Satan, and the new *Jerusalem* coming down from God out of Heaven, but when hee was old, when he was aged in years and in grace? The Lord speaks many a secret in the ears of aged Saints, of old Christians, which young Christians are not acquainted with, as that phrase imports, 2 *Sam.*7.27. *Thou O Lord God of Hosts hast revealed to thy servant*, so you read it in your books, but in the Hebrew it is, Lord thou hast revealed this to the ear of thy servant. Some wonder how that word to the ear comes to bee left out in your books, in which indeed the Emphasis lies; wee will tell many things in an old friends ear, which wee will not acquaint young ones with. So doth God many times whisper.

גליתה אזן
Galitha ezen.

whisper an old Disciple in the ear, and acquaints him with such things that hee hides from those that are of younger years. And by this you may see what an honour it is to be an old Disciple.

Heb. 5. 11, 12, 13, 14. Yet as *Solon* was not ashamed to say that in his old age he was a learner, so those that are the greatest Artists in Christianity, will confess, that they are still but learners.

Particular III.

An old Disciple, an old Christian, hee hath got the art of serving God, the art of Religion, got the art of hearing, the art of praying, the art of meditating, the art of repenting, the art of believing, the art of denying his natural self, his sinful self, his Religious self.

All Trades have their mystery and difficulty; so hath the Trade of Christianity; young Christians usually bungle in religious works, but old Christians acquit themselves like work-men that need not bee ashamed. A young Carpenter gives more blowes, and makes more chips, but an old Artist doth the most, and best work; a young Christian may make most noise in religious duties, but an old Christian

tian makes the best work. A young Musician may play more quick and nimble upon an instrument, than an old, but an old Musician hath more skill and judgement than a young: the application is easie; and by this you may also see, what an honour it is to bee an old Christian, &c.

Particular IV.

An old Disciple, an old Christian, is rich in spiritual experiences. O the experiences that hee hath of the waies of God, of the workings of God, of the Word of God, of the Love of God! O the Divine stories that old Christians can tell of the power of the Word, of the sweetness of the Word, of the usefulness of the Word! as a light to lead the soul, as a staff to support the soul, as a spur to quicken the soul, as an anchor to stay the soul, and as a cordial to comfort and strengthen the soul! O the stories that hee can tell you concerning the love of Christ, the Bloud of Christ, the Offices

1 Joh. 2. 1

Psal. 119. 49, 50. Old men love to speak of antient things.

Offices of Christ, the merits of Christ, the righteousnes of Christ, the graces of Christ, and the influence of Christ. O the stories that an old Disciple can tell you of the in-dwellings of the spirit, of the operations of the spirit, of the teachings of the spirit, of the leadings of the spirit, of the sealings of the spirit, of the witnessings of the spirit, and of the comforts and joyes of the spirit! O the stories that an old Christian can tell you of the evil of sin, the bitternes of sin, the deceitfulnes of sin, the prevalency of sin, and the happines of conquest over sin! O the stories that hee can tell you of the snares of Satan, the devices of Satan, the temptations of Satan, the rage of Satan, the malice of Satan, the watchfulnes of Satan, and the waies of triumphing over Satan! As an old Souldier can tell you of many battels, many scars, many wounds, many losses, and many victories, even to admiration: So an old Saint is able

to

to tell you many divine stories, even to admiration.

Pliny writes of the Crocodile, that shee grows to her last day: So aged Saints, they grow rich in spiritual experiences to the last. An old Christian being once asked, if hee grew in goodness, answered, yea, doubtless I doe, for God hath said, *The Righteous shall flourish like the Palm-tree* (now the Palm-tree never loseth his leaf, or fruit, saith *Pliny*) *hee shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon. Those that bee planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God; They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, they shall bee fat and flourishing.* A fellow to this promise *Isaiah* mentions, *Hearken unto mee, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are born by mee, from the belly, which are carried from the womb, and even to your old age; I am hee, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you.*

Hos. 14. 5, 6, 7.

Psal. 92. 12, 13, 14.

Isa. 46. 3, 4

There is nothing more commendable in fulneſs of age, than fulneſs of knowledge and experience, or nothing more honourable, than to ſee antient Chriſtians very much acquainted with the Antient of daies.

Dan. 7. 9. 13. 22.

It is a brave ſight to ſee antient Chriſtians, like the Almond-tree. Now the Almond-tree doth flouriſh, and is full of bloſſomes in the Winter of old age, for as *Pliny* tells us, the Almond-tree doth bloſſome in the month of *January*. Experiments in Religion are beyond notions and impreſſions; a ſanctified heart is better than a ſilver tongue; no man ſo rich, ſo honourable, ſo happy, as the Old Diſciple, that is rich in ſpiritual experiences; and yet there is no Chriſtian ſo rich in his experiences, but hee would be richer.

The Lawyer.

As *Julianus* ſaid, that when hee had one foot in the Grave, hee would have the other in the ſchool: So though an old Diſciple hath one foot in the Grave, yet he will have

have the other in Christs School, that hee may still bee treasuring up more and more Divine experiments; and by this also you see, *What an honour it is to be an Old Disciple, &c.*

Particular V.

An Old Disciple is very stout, courragious, firm, and fixt in his resolution.

An Old Christian is like a Pillar, a Rock, nothing can move him, nothing can shake him, what is suckt in in youth, will abide in old age; Old Souldiers are stout and couragious, nothing can daunt nor discourage them. When *Joshua* was an hundred and ten years old, O how couragious and resolute was hee! *And if it seeme evil unto you, to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve, whether the Gods that your Fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land yee dwell: but as for mee and my house, wee will serve* Psal. 44. 9. ult. Josh. 24. 15, 29

the Lord. And it came to pass, after these things, that Joshua *the Son of* Nun, *the Servant of the Lord dyed, being an hundred and ten years old.*

Considius, a Senator of *Rome*, told *Cæsar* boldly, that the Senators durst not come to counsel for fear of his Souldiers; hee replied, why then dost thou goe to the Senate; hee answered, because my age takes away my fear.

Ah! none so couragious, none so divinely fearless, none so careless in evil daies: as antient Christians. An old Christian knowes, that that good will doe him no good, which is not made good by perseverance; his resolution is like that of *Gonsalvo*, who protested to his Souldiers, shewing them *Naples*, that hee had rather dye one foot forwards, than to have his life secured for long by one foot of retreat. Shall such a man as I
Neh. 5. 11 am flee, said undaunted *Nehemiah*? hee will couragiously venture life and limb, rather than by one foot

of

of retreat, discredit profession with the reproach of fearfulnesse. It was a brave magnanimous speech of *Luther*, when dangers from opposers did threaten him, and his associates; Come (saith hee) let us sing the forty sixth *Psalm*, and then let them do their worst.

When *Polycarpus* was fourscore and six years old, he suffered Martyrdome couragiously, resolutely, and undauntedly.

When one of the antient Martyrs was very much threatned by his persecutors, he replied, there is nothing of things visible, nothing of things invisible, that I fear; I will stand to my profession of the name of Christ, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints, come on it what will.

Old Disciples, old Souldiers of Christ, they have the heart and courage of *Shammah*, one of *Davids* worthies, who stood and defended the field, when all the rest fled. The Hebrews call a young man

Aristotle, (though a Heathen) could say, that in some cases a man had better lose his life, than becowardly, *Arist. Ethic.* 3. *cap.* 1.

2 Sam. 23 11, 12.

Nagnar, which ſprings from a root that ſignifies to ſhake off, or to be toſſed to and fro, to note how ſicle, and how conſtant in inconſtancy young men are, they uſually are perſons, either of no reſolution for good, or of weak reſolution; they are too often wonne with a Nut, and loſt with an Apple; but now, aged Chriſtians, in all Earthquakes they ſtand faſt, like *Mount Zion*, that cannot be removed. And by this alſo you may ſee, *what an honour it is to be an Old Diſciple*, an old Chriſtian.

Mat. 19. 20, 21, 22.

Particular VI.

An old Diſciple, an old Chriſtian, is prepared for death, he hath been long a dying to ſin, to the world, to friends, to ſelf, to relations, to all, and no man ſo prepared to die, as he that thus daily dies.

Rom. 6. 6. Gal. 5. 14. ch 6. 14.

An old Diſciple hath lived ſincerely to Chriſt, he hath lived eminently to Chriſt, he hath lived in all conditions, and under all changes to Chriſt, he hath lived exemplarily to Chriſt, he hath lived

Rom. 14. 7, 8. Phil. 2. 21, 22, 23.

ed long to Christ, and therefore the more prepared to die, and be with Christ. An old Disciple hath a Crown in his eye, a Pardon in his bosome, and a Christ in his arms; and therefore may sweetly sing it out with old *Simeon*, *Lord, now let thy Servant depart in peace.* As *Hillary* said to his soul, Soul, thou hast served Christ this seventy years, and art thou afraid of death? go out soul, go out.

Many a day, said old *Cowper*, have I sought death with tears, not out of impatience, distrust, or perturbation, but because I am weary of sin, and fearful to fall into it. *Nazianzen* calls upon the King of terrours, devour mee, devour mee. And *Austine*, when old, could say, shall I die ever? yes, or shall I die at all? yes, why then Lord, if ever, why not now? why not now? so when *Modestus*, the Emperours Lieutenant threatned to kill *Basil*, he answered, if that be all, I fear not; yea, your Master cannot more pleasure mee, than in

Zeno, a wise Heathen, said, I have no fear, but of old age

Cyprian could receive the cruellest sentence of death with a *Deo gratias.* God I thank thee

in ſending me unto my heavenly Father, to whom I now live, and to whom I deſire to haſten.

I cannot ſay, as hee (ſaid old Mr. *Stephen Marſhal* a little before his death) I have not ſo lived, that I ſhould now be afraid to die, but this I can ſay, I have ſo learned Chriſt, that I am not afraid to die. Old Chriſtians have made no more to die, than to dine. It is nothing to die, when the Comforter ſtands by. Old Diſciples know, that to die, is but to lye down in their beds, they know that their dying day is better than their birth day; and this made *Solomon* to preſer his Coffin before his Crown, the day of his diſſolution, before the day of his coronation.

Iſa. 57. 1, 2

Eccleſ. 7. 1

The Ancients were wont to call the daies of their death, *Natalia*, not dying daies, but birth daies.

The Jews to this day ſtick not to call their *Golgotha's*, *Batte Caiim*, the houſes or places of the Living; Old Chriſtians know, that

that Death is but an entrance into life, 'tis but a passeover, a *Jubile*, 'tis but the Lords Gentleman-usher to conduct them to Heaven; and this prepares them to die, and makes death more desirable than life; and by this you may see, *that it is an honour to be an Old Disciple.*

Particular VII.

An Old Disciple, an Old Christian, shall have a great reward in Heaven.

1 Cor. 15. ult. 2 Cor. 9. 6. Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. God will reward his Servants, *Secundum laborem*, according to their labour, though not *Secundum proventum*, according to the successe of their labour.

Old Christians have done much, and suffered much for Christ; and the more any man doth, or suffers for Christ here, the more glory he shall have hereafter. 'Twas the saying of an Old Disciple upon his dying bed, Hee is come, hee is come (meaning the Lord) with a great reward for a little work. *Agrippa* having suffered imprisonment for wishing *Caius* Emperour; the first thing *Caius* did, when hee came to the Empire, was to preferre *Agrippa* to a Kingdome, hee

he gave him also a chain of Gold, as heavy as the chain of Iron that was upon him in prison; And will not Christ richly reward all his suffering Saints? Surely hee will: Christ will at last pay a Christian for every prayer he hath made, for every Sermon he hath heard, for every tear he hath shed, for every morsel he hath given, for every burden he hath born, for every battel he hath fought, for every enemy he hath slain, and for every temptation that he hath overcome.

Cyrus in a great expedition against his enemies, the better to incourage his souldiers to fight, in an oration that he made at the head of his Army, promised upon the victory, to make every Foot-souldier an horseman, and every horseman a Commander, and that no Officer that did valiantly, should be unrewarded; but what are *Cyrus* his rewards, to the rewards that Christ our General, promises to his? *Rev.* 3.21. *To him that o-*

Mat. 19. 28. Luke 22. 30. Mat. 5. 12.

vercometh

vercometh, will I grant to ſit with mee in my Throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his Throne. As there is no Lord to Chriſt, ſo there is no rewards to Chriſts, his rewards are the greateſt rewards, hee gives Kingdomes, Crowns, Thrones, he gives Grace and Glory, *Pſalme* 48. 11.

As the King in *Plutarch* ſaid of a great, it is no Kingly gift, & of a Talent, it is no baſe bribe.

It is ſaid of *Araunah*, that noble *Jebuſite*, renowned for his bounty, that he had but a ſubjects purſe, but a Kings heart: but Jeſus Chriſt hath a Kings purſe, as well as a Kings heart, and accordingly hee gives.

And as Chriſts rewards are the greateſt rewards, ſo his rewards are the ſureſt rewards; he is faithful that hath promiſed, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 24.

Antiochus promiſed often, but ſeldome gave (upon which he was called, in way of deriſion, a great promiſer) but Jeſus Chriſt never made any promiſe, but hee hath or will perform it, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. nay, hee is often better than his word,

1 *Cor.*

1 *Cor.* 2. 9 he gives many times more than we ask. The sick man of the Palsie asked but health, and Christ gave him health, and a pardon to boot. *Solomon* desired but wisdome, and the Lord gave him wisdome, and honour, and riches, and the favour of Creatures, as Paper and Pack-thred into the bargain. *Jacob* asked him but cloaths to wear, and bread to eat, and the Lord gave him these things and riches, and other mercies into the bargain.

Mat. 9. 2.

2 Chr. 1. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Gen. 28. 20 compared with Gen. 32. 10.

Christ doth not measure his gifts by our Petitions, but by his own Riches and Mercies. Gracious souls many times receive many gifts and favours from God, that they never dreampt of, nor durst presume to beg, which others extreamly strive after, and go without.

Archelaus being much importuned by a covetous Courtier for a cup of gold, wherein he drank, gave it unto *Euripides*, that stood by, saying, Thou art worthy to ask

ask, and bee denied, but *Euripides* is worthy of gifts, although hee ask not.

The Prodigal craves no more, but the place of a hired Servant, but hee is entertained as a Son, hee is clad with the best robe, and fed with the fatted Calf, he hath a Ring for his hand, and Shooes for his feet, rich supplies more than hee desired. *Jacobs* Sons in a time of Famine, desired only Corn, and they return with Corn and Money in their sacks, and with good news too, *Joseph* is alive, and Governour of all *Ægypt*. Luke 15. 19--25. Gen. 42.

And as his rewards are greater and surer than others rewards, so they are more durable and lasting than others rewards; the Kingdom that he gives, is a Kingdome that shakes not; the treasures that hee gives, are treasures that corrupt not; and the glory that he gives is glory that fadeth not away; but the rewards that men give, are like themselves, fickle and unconstant, they are withering and fading. Heb. 12.28 Mat. 6.19, 20. 1 Pet. 1. 4.

Xerxes

Xerxes crowned his Steers-man in the morning, and beheaded him in the evening of the same day.

And *Andronicus* the Greek Emperour, crowned his Admiral in the morning, and then took off his head in the afternoon.

Roffensis had a Cardinals Hat sent him, but his head was cut off before it came to him. Most may say of their Crowns, as that King said of his, O Crown! more noble than happy. It was a just complaint which long agoe was made against the Heathen gods, (*O faciles dare summa deos, eademque tueri, difficiles!*) they could give their favourites great gifts, but they could not maintain them in the possession of them; the world may give you great things, but the World cannot maintaine you in the possession of them; but the great things, the great rewards that Christ gives his, hee will for ever maintain them in the possession of them, otherwise Hea-

Heaven would not bee Heaven, Glory would not bee Glory; now by all these things you see, that it is a very great honour to bee an old Disciple, an old Christian; and this honour you will never attain to, except you begin to bee really good betimes, except in the morning of your youth, you return to the Lord, and get an interest in him.

I shall now come to make some Use and Application of this weighty truth, to our selves.

You see beloved, that it is the great Duty and concernment of Young Men, *To bee really good betimes*: If this bee so; Then,

Use I.

First, This Truth lookes sowerly and sadly upon such young men, that are onely seemingly good, that make some shewes of goodness, but are not right toward

wards God at the root.

2 Chron. 24. 1,2,3, 4,5,6,13, 14,15,16.

As *Joash* when hee was young, hee seemed to have good things in him towards the Lord, whilst good *Jehoiada* lived, but when *Jehoiada* was dead, *Joash* his goodness was buried with him.

Neroes first five years are famous, but afterwards who more cruel.

Ah! how many in these daies that have been seemingly good, have turned to bee naught, very naught, yea, stark naught?

It is said of *Tiberius*, that whilst *Augustus* ruled, hee was no waies tainted in his reputation, and that whilst *Drusus* and *Germanicus* were alive, hee feigned those vertues which hee had not, to maintain a good opinion of himself, in the hearts of the people; but after hee had got himself out of the reach of contradiction and controulment, there was no fact in which hee was not faulty, no crime to which hee was not accessary.

There are some that write, that after *Demas* had forsaken *Paul*, he became a Priest in an Idol-Temple.

Oh! That this were not applicable to many young persons

ſons in theſe daies, who have made great ſhewes, and taken upon them a great name, who have begun to out-ſhine the Stars, but are now gone out like ſo many ſnuffs, to the diſhonour of God, the reproach of the Goſpel, the grief of others, and the hazard of their own ſouls.

It was a cuſtome of old, when any was baptized, the Miniſter delivered a white garment to be put on, ſaying, Take thou this white veſtment, and ſee thou bring it forth without ſpot at the Judgement ſeat of Jeſus Chriſt; whereupon one *Maritta* baptizing one *Elpidophorus*, who when he was grown up, proved a prophane wretch, hee brings forth the white garment, and holding it up, ſhakes it againſt him, ſaying, This linnen garment *Elpidophorus* ſhall accuſe thee at the coming of Chriſt, which I have kept by me as a witneſſe of thy Apoſtacy.

Crabs that go backward, are reckoned among the unclean creatures. Lev. 11. 10

Ah! young men and women, your former profeſſions will be a ſad witneſſe againſt you in the

great day of our Lord Jesus, except you repent and return in good earnest to the Lord.

Prov. 14 14.

Oh it had been better that you had never made profession, that you had never set your faces towards Heaven, that you had never pretended to God and Christ, that you had never known the way of Righteousness, than after you have known it, to turn from the holy Commandement!

2 Pet. 1. 21.

Cyprian in his Sermon *de lapsis*, reporteth of divers, who forsaking the Faith, were given over to evil spirits, and died fearfully.

Oh the delusions, and the Christ-dethroning, conscience-wasting, and soul-undoing opinions, and principles, that many young ones (who once were hopeful ones) are given up to! That dreadful Scripture seems to be made good in power upon them: *All you that forsake the Lord, shall come to be ashamed, and they that depart from him, shall be written upon the dust*; to begin well, and not to proceed, is

Jer. 17. 13.

but

but to aspire to a higher pitch, that the fall may be the more desperate. Backsliding is a wounding sin. You read of no armes for the back; though you do for the breast: He that is but seemingly good, will prove at last exceeding bad; 2 *Tim.* 3. 13. *They wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

Hos. 4. 14. Eph. 6. 11. 18.

The Wolf, though he often dissembles, and closely hides his nature, yet he will one time or other shew himself to be a Wolf.

In the daies of *Hadrian* the Emperor, there was one *Bencoiby*, who gathering a multitude of Jews together, called himself *Ben-cocuba*, the son of a star; applying that propheſie to himself, *Numb.* 23. 17. but his mask was taken off, his Hypocrisie discovered, and he found to be *Barchosaba*; the son of a lye; this age hath afforded many such Monsters, but their folly is discovered, and their practises abhorred. This was the young mans commendation in the Text, *That there was found in him some real good*

Comets make a greater blaze than fixed stars.

good towards the Lord.

Use II.

2. This truth looks sowerly and sadly upon such young men, who are so far from having good things in them towards the Lord, that they give themselves up to those youthful lusts and vanities that are dishonouring, provoking, and displeasing to the Lord, who roar and revel, and gad, and game, and dice, and drink, and drab, and what not? these make work with a witness for repentance, or hell, or the physician of souls.

I shall but touch upon the evils of youth, and then come to that which is mostly intended.

CHAP. III.

The first evil that most properly attends youth, is Pride.

1 Tim. 3, 6 Pride of heart, pride of apparel, pride of parts; young men are apt to

to bee proud of health, ſtrength, friends, relations, wit, wealth, wiſdome: two things are very rare, the one is to ſee a young man humble and watchful, and the other is to ſee an old man contented and cheerful.

Bernard ſaith, that pride is the rich mans couzen, and experience every day ſpeaks out pride to bee the young mans couzen. God (ſaid one) had three Sons, *Lucifer*, *Adam*, and *Chriſt*, the firſt aſpired to bee like God in power, and was therefore thrown down from Heaven: The ſecond to bee like him in knowledge, and was therefore deſervedly driven out of *Eden*, when young: The third did altogether imitate and follow him in his goodneſs, mercy, and humility, and by ſo doing obtained an everlaſting inheritance.

Pride cannot climb ſo high, but juſtice will ſit above.

Remember this, young men, and as you would get a Paradiſe, and keep a Paradiſe, get humble, and keep humble. Pride is an evil that puts men upon all manner of e-

vil. *Accius* the Poet, though he were a dwarf, yet would be pictured tall of ſtature.

Pſaphon, a proud Lybian would needs be a God, and having caught ſome birds, he taught them to ſpeak and prattle, The great god *Pſaphon*.

Menecrates, a proud Phyſician, wrote thus to King *Philip*, *Menecrates* a God, to *Philip* a King.

Proud *Simon* in *Lucian*, having got a little wealth, changed his name (from *Simon* to *Simonides*) for that there were ſo many beggers of his kin, and ſet the houſe on fire wherein he was born, becauſe no body ſhould point at it.

What ſad evils *Pharaohs* pride, and *Hamans* pride, and *Herods* pride, and *Belſhazzars* pride put them upon, I ſhall not now mention.

Acce, an old woman, ſeeing her deformity in a glaſſe, went mad, &c.

Ah young men, young men! had others a window to look into your breaſts, or did your hearts ſtand where your faces do, you would even bee afraid of your ſelves,

ſelves, you would loath and abhor your ſelues.

Ah! young men, young men, as you would have God to keep houſe with you, as you would have his minde and ſecrets made known to you, as you would have Chriſt to delight in you, and the Spirit to dwell in you, as you would be honoured among Saints, and attended and guarded by Angels, get humble, and keep humble.

Tertullians counſel to the young gallants of thoſe times was excellent, cloathe your ſelves (ſaid he) with the ſilk of piety, with the ſattin of ſanctity, and with the purple of modeſty; So ſhall you have God himſelf to be your Suiter. *Tert. de Cult. fæm. Cap. 13.*

2 Evil.

The ſecond evil that youth is ſubject to, is ſenſual pleaſures and delights. Rejoyce, Oh young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the daies of thy youth, and walk in the waies of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eies. The wiſe man by an Ironical conceſſion, bids him

Eccl. 11. 9. 2 Sam. 13. 23--29. ἡδονὴ δέλεαρ κακῶν. Pleaſure is the bait of ſin, ſaith *Plato.*

him rejoyce, &c. Sin, &c. thou art wilful, and reſolved upon taking thy pleaſure, goe on, take thy courſe: this he ſpeaks by way of mockage, and bitter ſcoffe, &c. but know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into judgement. So *Sampſon* made a feaſt; for ſo uſed the young men to do, the hearts of young men uſually are much given up to pleaſure. I have read of a young man, who was very much given up to pleaſures, hee ſtanding by St. *Ambroſe*, and ſeeing his excellent death, turned to other young men by him, and ſaid,

Judg. 14. 10.

Oh! that I might live with you, and die with him. Senſual pleaſures are like to thoſe Locuſts, *Rev.* 9.7. the crowns upon whoſe heads are ſaid to be only as it were ſuch, or ſuch in appearance, and like gold, but *verſ.* 10. it is ſaid, there were (not as it were, but) ſtings in their tails.

They were much out that held pleaſure to be mans *ſummum bonum.*

Senſual pleaſures, are but ſeeming, and appearing pleaſures, but the pains that attend them are

true

true and real; he that delights in ſenſual pleaſures, ſhall finde his greateſt pleaſures, become his bittereſt pains.

The Heathens look'd upon the back parts of pleaſure, and ſaw it going away from them, and leaving a ſting behinde.

Pealures paſs away as ſoon as they have wearied out the body, and leave it as a bunch of grapes, whoſe juice hath been preſſed out; which made one to ſay, (*Nulla major voluptas, quam voluptatis faſtidium*) I ſee no greater pleaſure in this world, than the contempt of pleaſure.

Julian, though an Apoſtate, yet profeſſed, that the pleaſures of the body were far below a great ſpirit. And *Tully* ſaith, hee is not worthy of the name of man (*qui unum diem velit eſſe in voluptate*) that would entirely ſpend one whole day in pleaſures; it is better not to deſire pleaſures, than to enjoy them. I ſaid of laughter, it is mad, and of mirth, what doſt Eccl. 2. 2.

doſt thou? The interrogation bids a challenge to all the Maſters of mirth, to produce any one ſatisfactory fruit which it affordeth, if they could.

Xerxes being weary of all pleaſures, promiſed rewards to the inventers of new pleaſures, which being invented, he nevertheleſſe remained unſatisfied. As a Bee flieth from flower to flower, and is not ſatisfied; and as a ſick man removes from one bed to another, from one ſeat to another, from one chamber to another, for eaſe, and finds none: So men given up to ſenſual pleaſures, goe from one pleaſure to another, but can finde no content, no ſatisfaction in their pleaſures. *The eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.* There is a curſe of unſatisfiableneſſe lies upon the creature; honours cannot ſatisfie the ambitious man, nor riches the covetous man, nor pleaſures the voluptuous man; man cannot take off the wearineſſe of one pleaſure,

Eccl. 1. 8.

by

by another, for after a few evaporated minutes are ſpent in pleaſures, the body preſently fails the mind, and the mind the deſire, and the deſire the ſatisfaction, and all the man.

Pleaſures are *Junos* in the purſuit, and but clouds in the enjoyment; Pleaſure is a beautiful harlot, ſitting in her chariot, whoſe four wheels are Pride, Gluttony, Luſt, and Idleneſſe; the two horſes are, Proſperity and Abundance; the two drivers are Idleneſs and Security, her attendants and followers are guilt, grief, late repentance (if any) and oft death and ruine; many great men, and many ſtrong men, and many rich men, and many hopeful men, and many young men, have come to their ends by her, but never any enjoyed full ſatisfaction and content in her.

Ah! Young men, Young men, avoid this harlot, and come not neer the door of her houſe. And as for lawful pleaſures, let me onely ſay this, 'tis your wiſdome onely

Becanus ſaith, that the fruit of the tree of knowledge is ſweet, but in the end it breeds *choler*, ſo do worldly pleaſures.

onely to touch them, to taſte them, and to uſe them, as *Mithridates* uſed poiſon, to fortifie your ſelves againſt caſual extremities and maladies: when Mr. *Roger Aſcham* asked the Lady *Jane Grey*, how ſhe could loſe ſuch paſtime, her Father with the Dutcheſſe, being a hunting in the Park, ſmilingly anſwered, all the ſport in the Park is but a ſhadow of that pleaſure I find in this book, having a good book in her hand.

Auguſtine before his converſion, could not tell how to live without thoſe pleaſures which he delighted much in, but when his nature was changed, and his heart graciouſly turned to the Lord, O how ſweet (ſaith he) is it to be without thoſe former ſweet delights!

Ah! Young men, when once you come to experience the goodneſſe and ſweetneſſe that is in the Lord, and in his Word, and waies, you will then ſit down and grieve, that you have ſpent more Wine in the cup, than Oil in the lamp.

There

There are no pleaſures ſo delighting, ſo ſatisfying, ſo raviſhing, ſo ingaging, and ſo abiding, as thoſe that ſpring from union, and communion with God, as thoſe that flow from a ſenſe of intereſt in God, and from an humble and a holy walking with God.

3 Evil.

The third ſinne of youth is raſhneſſe.

They many times know little, and fear leſs, and ſo are apt raſhly to run on, and run out often to their hurt, but more often to their hazard. *Exhort young men to bee ſober minded, or diſcreet.* They are apt to bee raſh, to bee hot-ſpurs. As you may ſee in *Rehoboams* young Counſellers, who counſelled him to tell the people (that groaned under their burthens) that his little finger ſhould be thicker than his Fathers loins, and that hee would add to their yoak, and that where-

Ariſt. Polit.

Tit. 2. 6.

1 Kings 12. 8, 9, 10, 11.

whereas his Father had chastized them with Whips, he would chastize them with Scorpions, this rash counsel proved *Rehoboams* ruine, yea, *David* himself, though a good man, yet being in his warm blood, and young, how sadly was he overtaken with rashnesse? *As the Lord God of Israel liveth* (saith he) *except thou hadst hastened, and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto* Nabal, *by to morrow light, any that pisseth against the wall.* And this he bindes with an oath; because the Master was foolishly wilful, the innocent servants must all be woful; and because *Nabal* had been niggardly of his bread, *David* would be prodigal of his blood.

1 Sam. 25. 34, 35. *Diis proximus ille est, quem ratio, non ira, movet. Sen.* Hee is next to God, whom reason, not anger moveth.

Ah! how unlike a Christian, yea, how below a man, doth *David* carry it, when his blood is up, and he a captive to rashnesse, and passion? Rashnesse will admit of naught for reason, but what unreasonable self shall dictate for reason; as sloath seldome

dome bringeth actions to good birth, ſo raſhneſſe makes them alwayes abortive, ere well formed: A raſh ſpirit is an ungodlike ſpirit; a raſh ſpirit is a weak ſpirit, it is an effeminate ſpirit. *A man of underſtanding is of an excellent ſpirit*, or as the Hebrew will bear, is of a cool ſpirit, not raſh and hot, ready at every turn to put out his ſoul in wrath. Raſhneſſe unmans a man, it will put a man upon things below man-hood. *Heroſtratus* (a hot-ſpur) an obſcure baſe fellow, did in one night by fire deſtroy the Temple of *Diana* at *Epheſus*, which was two hundred and twenty yeares in building, of all *Aſia*, at the coſt of ſo many Princes, and beautified with the labours and cunning of ſo many excellent workmen; the truth is, there would be no end, ſhould I diſcover the many ſad & great evils that are uſhered into the world by that one evil, raſhneſs, which uſually attends youth, &c. and therefore young men decline it, and arm your ſelves againſt it. &c. Prov. 17. 27.

4 Evil

4 Evil.

The fourth ſin that ordinarily attends on youth, is mocking and ſcoffing at religious men, and religious things.

They were young ones, that ſcoffingly and ſcornfully ſaid, to the Prophet, *Go up thou bald-head, Go up thou baldhead*. And the young men derided and mocked *Job. But now, they that are younger than I, have me in deriſion; whoſe Fathers I would have diſdained, to have ſet with the dogs of my flock. Upon my right hand riſe the youth, they puſh away my feet, and they raiſe up againſt me the waies of their deſtruction, &c.* And Oh that this age did not afford many ſuch Monſters, who are notable, who are infamous in this black Art of ſcoffing and deriding the people of God, and the waies of God.

2 Kings 2. 23, 24. Job 30. 1. 12, 13, 14, 15.

The *Athenians* once ſcoffed at *Sylla's* wife, and it had well nigh coſt the razing of their City, hee was

was so provoked with the indignity, and will you think it safe to scoff at the people of God, who are the Spouse of Christ, who are as the apple of his eye, who are the signet on his right hand, his portion, his pleasant portion, his inheritance, his Jewel, his royal Diadem? Ah young men, young men! will you seriously consider how sadly and sorely hee hath punished other scoffers and mockers? and by his judgements on them, be warned never to scoff at the people of God, or his waies more. *Julian* the Emperour was a great Scoffer of Christians, but at last hee was struck with an Arrow from Heaven, that made him cry out (*Vicisti Galilee*) thou *Galilean* (meaning our Saviour Christ) hast overcome mee. *Felix* for one malicious scoff, did nothing day and night but vomit blood, till his unhappy soul was separated from his wretched body. *Perecydes* was consumed by Worms alive, for giving

Rev. 21--
Zach. 2. 5
Deut. 32. 9
Isa. 19. 25
Joel 2. 17
Psal. 33. 12
Isa. 26. 3

Religion but a nick-name. *Lucian*, for barking against Religion like a Dog, was by the just judgement of God devoured of Dogs. Remember these dreadful judgements of God on scoffers, and if you like them, then mock on, scoff on, but know, that justice will at last be even with you, nay above you.

5 Evil.

The Fifth and last Evil (that I shall mention) *that attends and waits on youth, is lustfulnesse, and wantonnesse.*

2 Tim. 2. 22. Which occasioned aged *Paul* to caution his young *Timothy*, to flee youthful lusts. *Timothy* was a chaste and chastened peece, hee was much sanctified and mortified, his graces were high, and corruptions low; he walked up and down this World, with dying thoughts, and with a weak, distempered, declining, dying body; his heart was in Heaven, and his foot in the Grave, and yet Youth is such a slippery age, that *Paul* commands him

him to flee, to post from youthful lusts; though *Timothy* was a good man, a weak sickly man, a marvellous temperate man, drinking water rather than wine, yet he was but a man, yea a young man; and therefore *Pauls* counsel and command is, that he flee youthful lusts. And *Solomon*, who had sadly experienced the slipperiness of youth, gives this counsel, *Put away the evils of thy flesh, for childhood and youth are vanity.* Eccl. 11. 10. Hee was a young man that followed the Harlot to her house; he was young in years, and young in knowledge; (*Sulazer* upon the words saith) that was a happy age, that afforded but one simple young man among many; whereas late times afford greater store. Ah! too many of the youths of this age, instead of flying from youthful lusts, they post and pursue after youthful lusts. Prov. 7. 7, 8, 9. 10, 11, &c.

Chrysostome (speaking of youth, saith, it is (*difficilem, factabilem, fallibilem, vehementissimisq; egentem frœnis*) hard to bee ruled, easie to *Chrysost. Homil. 1. Ad Populum.*

be drawn away, apt to be deceived, and ſtanding in need of very violent reins.

Lapide. The Antients did picture youth like a young man naked, with a veil over his face; his right hand bound behind him, his left hand looſe, and time behinde him pulling one threed out of his veil every day, intimating that young men are voyd of knowledge, and blind, unfit to do good, ready to doe evil, till Time by little and little make them wiſer. Well young man, remember this, that the leaſt ſparklings and kindlings of luſts, will firſt or laſt coſt thee groans, & griefs, tears, and terrours enough. Theſe five are the ſins that uſually are waiting and attending on youth, but from theſe the young man in the Text was by Grace preſerved, and ſecured, which is more than I dare affirm of all, into whoſe hand this Treatiſe ſhall fall. But though theſe five are the ſins of youth; yet they are not all the ſins of youth, for youth is capable

pable of, and subject to all other sins whatsoever, but these are the special sins that most usually waits and attends on young men, when they are in the spring and morning of their youth.

Other sins attend youth, as 1 Ignorance. 1 Cor. 14. 20. 2 Falshood. Psa. 58. 3. 3 Excessive love of liberty. 4 Impatience of Councils and reproofs. Jer. 31. 18, 19. 5 Impudence. Isa. 3. 5. 6 A trifling spirit, Eccl. 11. 10. 7 Prodigality.

CHAP. IV.

Use.

I shall now hasten to the main Use that I intend to stand upon, and that is an Use of Exhortation, to all young persons.

Ah Sirs! as you tender the glory of God, the good of your bodies, the joy of your Christian friends, and the salvation of your own souls; bee exhorted and perswaded to be really good betimes. It was the praise and honour of *Abijah*, that there was found in him some good thing towards the Lord in the Primrose of his child-hood.

Oh that it might be your honour and happinesse! to be really good betimes, that it might be to you a praise, and a name, that in the

morning of your youth you have begun to ſeek the Lord, and to know and love the Lord, and to get an intereſt and propriety in the Lord: Now that this Exhortation may ſtick and take,

I beſeech you ſeriouſly to weigh and ponder theſe following Motives, or Conſiderations.

1 Motive.

Firſt conſider, *It is an Honour to be good betimes.* A young Saint is like the morning ſtar; he is like a Pearl in a gold Ring. It is mentioned as a ſingular honour to the beleeving Jews, that they firſt truſted in Chriſt, that wee ſhould bee to the praiſe of his glory, who firſt truſted in Chriſt, this was their praiſe, their crown, that they were firſt converted, and turned to Chriſt and Chriſtianity. So *Paul* mentioning *Andronicus* and *Junia*, doth not omit this circumſtance of praiſe and honour, that they were in Chriſt before him, Salute *Andronicus* and *Junia*, my Kinſmen, and my fellow priſoners, who

Eph. 1. 12.

Rom. 16. 7

who are of note among the Apostles, who also were in Christ before mee.

And so it was the honour of the house of *Stephanas*, that they were the first fruits of *Achaia*, it was their glory, that they were the first that received and welcomed the Gospel in *Achaia*. 'Tis a greater honour for a young man to outwrestle sin, Satan, temptation, the world, and lust, than ever *Alexander* the Great could attain unto. It was *Judah* his praise and honour, that they were first in fetching home *David* their King. 1 Cor. 16. 15. 2 Sam. 19. 15.

Ah! young men and women, it will bee your eternal praise and honour, if you shall be before others, if you shall be the first among many, who shall know the Lord, and seek the Lord, who shall receive the Lord, and imbrace him; who shall cleave to the Lord, and serve him; who shall honour the Lord, and obey him; who shall delight in the Lord, and walk with him. The *Romans* built

Virtues and Honours Temple close together, to shew, that the way to honour was by virtue; and indeed there is no Crown to that which goodnesse sets upon a mans head, all other honour is fading and withering. *Adonibezeck* a
Judg. 1. 7. mighty Prince, is suddenly made fellow-commoner with the Dogs. And *Nebuchadnezzar*, a mighty
Dan. 4. 28 Conquerour, turned a grazing among the Oxen. And *Herod* reduced from a conceited god, to be the
Act. 11. 23 most loathsome of men, living carrion, arrested by the vilest of creatures, upon the suit of his affronted Creatour. And *Haman*
Esth. 7. 10. feasted with the King one day, and made a feast for Crows the next I might tell you of a *Bajazet*, and *Belisarius*, two of the greatest Commanders in the world, and many others, who have suddenly fallen from the top of worldly honour and felicity, into the greatest contempt and misery, but I shall not at this time; But that honour that arises from mens being

ing gracious betimes, is such honour, that the World can neither give nor take; it is honour, it is a Crown that will still bee green and flourishing, it is honour that will bed and board with a man, that will abide with a man under all trials and changes, that will to the grave, that will to Heaven with a man.

Ah Sirs! It is no small honour to you, who are in the spring and morning of your dayes, that the Lord hath left upon record several instances of his love and delight in young men, hee chose *David* a younger Brother, and passes by his elder Brothers; hee frowns upon *Esau*, and passes by his door; and sets his love and delight upon *Jacob* the younger Brother; hee kindly and lovingly accepts of *Abels* person and Sacrifice; and rejects both *Cains* person and Sacrifice, though hee was the elder Brother. Among all the Disciples, *John* was the youngest, and the most and best be-

1 Sam. 16. 11,12,13.

Rom. 9. 12,13.

Gen. 4,3, 4,5,6.

Joh. 13. 23

beloved. There was but one young man that came to Christ, and hee came not aright; and all the good that was in him, was but some moral good, and yet Christ loved him, with a love of pity and compassion; the Greek word signifies, to speak friendly, and deal gently with one; and so did Christ with him, all which should exceedingly incourage young men to be good betimes, to be gracious in the morning of their youth; no way to true honour like this, but

Mark 10. 19,20,21.

ἀγαπᾶν.

a Motive.

Secondly, Consider, *Christ loved poor sinners, and gave himself for them, when he was in the prime of his age* (being supposed to be about thirty and three) *and will you put him off with the worst of your time?*

The sacrifices in the Law were young Lambs, and young Kids, to shew, that Christ our Sacrifice, should die and suffer for our sins, in the flower of his age.

Ah! Young men, young men, Christ gave himself up to death, made himself an offering for your sins, for your sakes, when hee was in the prime and flower of his age, and why then should you put off

Christ

Christ to old age? Did hee dye for sin in the prime of his age? and will not you dye to sin in the prime of your age? Did hee offer himself for you in the spring, and morning of his yeares? and will not you offer up your selves to him in the spring and morning of your yeares? O give not Christ cause to say, I dyed for you betimes, but you have not lived to mee betimes; I was early in my sufferings for you, but you have not been early in your returning to mee; I made haste to compleat your Redemption, but you have made no haste to make sure your Vocation, and Election; I staied not, I lingred not, but soon suffered what I was to suffer, and quickly did what was to be done for your eternal welfare, but you have stayed and lingered (like *Lot* in *Sodome*) and have not done what you might have done, in order to your everlasting good; in the Primerose of my daies, I sweat for you,

Rom. 12. 1, 2.

2 Pet. 1. 10

Gen. 19. 16.

you, I wept for you, I bled for you, I hung on the Crosse for you, I bore the wrath of my Father for you, but you have not in the primrose of your daies sweat under the sense of divine displeasure, nor wept over your sins, nor mourned over mee, whom you have so often grieved and pierced; I could not be quiet nor satisfied till I had put you into a capacity, into a possibility of salvation, and yet you are well enough quieted and satisfied, though you do not know whether ever you shall bee saved.

Zech. 12. 10.

Ah Sirs! how sad would it bee with you, if Jesus Christ should secretly thus expostulate with your consciences in this your day.

Oh! how terrible would it bee with you, if Christ should thus visibly plead against you in his great day. Ah! Young men, young men, and women, who but souls much left of God, blinded by Satan, and hardened in sin, can hear Jesus Christ speaking

2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

ing thus to them? I ſuffered for Sinners betimes, I laid down a ranſome for ſouls betimes, I pacified my Fathers Wrath betimes, I ſatisfied my Fathers Juſtice betimes, I merited grace and mercy for Sinners betimes, I brought in an everlaſting righteouſneſs upon the World betimes, &c. I ſay, who can hear Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaking thus, and his heart not fall in love and league with Chriſt, and his ſoul not unite to Chriſt, and reſign to Chriſt, and cleave to Chriſt, and for ever bee one with Chriſt, except it be ſuch that are for ever left by Chriſt? Well, remember this (*Quanto pro nobis vilior, tanto nobis charior*) the more vilde Chriſt made himſelf for us, the more dear hee ought to bee unto us.

Ah! Young men, remember this, when Chriſt was young, hee was tempted and tried, when hee was in the morning of his daies, his wounds were deep, his burden weighty, his cup bitter, his ſweat pain-

painful, his agony and torment, above conception, beyond expression; when hee was young, that blessed Head of his was crowned with thorns, and those eyes of his that were purer than the Sun, were put out by the darkness of death, and those ears of his which now hear nothing but *Hallelujahs* of Saints and Angels, were filled with the blasphemies of the multitude, and that blessed beautiful face of his, which was fairer than the Sons of men, was spit on by beastly filthy wretches, and that gracious mouth and tongue that spake as never man spake, was slandered and accused of blasphemy, and those hands of his which healed the Sick, which gave out pardons, which swayed a Scepter in Heaven, and another on Earth, were nailed to the Cross, and those feet that were beautiful upon the Mountains, that brought the glad tidings of peace and salvation into the world, and that were like unto fine brasse, were

Nolo vivere sine vulnere, cum te video vulneratum. Bonaventur. Oh my God, as long as I see thy wounds, I will never live without wounds.

Aut Deus naturæ patitur, aut mundi machin· dissolvitur, said *Dionysius Alexandrinus.* Either the God of Nature suffered, or the frame of the world will be dissolved.

were also nailed to the Cross; All these great and sad things did Jesus Christ suffer for you, in the prime and flower of his daies, and Oh! what an unspeakable provocation should this bee to all young ones, to give up themselves betimes to Christ, to serve, love, honour, and obey him betimes, even in the spring and morning of their youth.

Let the thoughts of a crucified Christ (saith one) be never out of your mind; let them be meat and drink unto you, let them be your sweetness and consolation, your honey and your desire, your reading and your meditation, your life, death, and resurrection.

3 Motive.

The third Motive or Consideration to provoke you to begin to be good betimes, in this, *viz.*

That it is the best and choicest way in the world, to bee rich in gracious experiences betimes, (which

The Philosopher once said, *solus sapiens dives*, onely the wise man is the rich man.

(which are the beſt riches in all the World) as hee that ſets up for himſelf betimes, is in the moſt hopeful way to bee rich betimes: So hee that is good in good earneſt betimes, hee is in the ready way, the high-way of being rich in Grace, and rich in goodneſs, they uſually prove men of great obſervation, and great experience.

Pſal. 63. 1, 2. Exod. 3. 3 19, 22, &c. Pſal. 65. 11, 12

God loves to ſhew theſe his beauty, and his glory in his Sanctuary. Hee delights to cauſe his glory and his goodneſs to paſs before ſuch: theſe ſhall finde all his paths drop marrow and fatneſſe, for theſe the Lord of Hoſts will make

Iſa. 25. 6

a feaſt of fat things, a feaſt of Wines on the Lees, of fat things full of marrow, of Wines on the Lees well refined; theſe ſhall have all manner of pleaſant fruits laid up at their gates for their well beloved;

Cant. 7. 13

none have ſo many choice pledges of Chriſts love, nor ſo many ſweet kiſſes of Chriſts mouth, nor ſo many imbraces in Chriſts arms, as thoſe ſouls that are good be-

betimes; O the grace, the goodneſſe, the ſweetneſſe, the fatneſſe that Chriſt is ſtill a droping into their hearts! Chriſt will make their hearts his largeſt treaſury, hee'l lay up moſt of his heavenly treaſure in their ſouls; there hee will ſtore up mercies new and old; there he will treaſure up all plenty, rariety, and variety, there he will lay up all that heart can wiſh, or need require; O the many drops of myrrhe that falls from Chriſts fingers upon their hearts! O the many ſecrets that Chriſt reveals in their ears! O the many Love-Letters that Chriſt ſends to theſe! O the many viſits that he gives to theſe! O the turns, the walks that hee hath in Paradiſe with theſe! there are none in the world for experience and intelligence to theſe. Ah! Young men, young men, as you would be rich in the beſt riches, beginne to bee good betimes; as there is no Riches to ſpiritual Riches, ſo there is no

Earthly riches are full of poverty. *Divitiæ corporales, paupertatis plenæ ſunt.*

way to be rich in these riches, but by beginning to be good (in good earnest) betimes.

If there were any happinesse in riches, the Gods would not want them saith *Seneca.*

As for worldly riches, Philosophers have contemned them, and preferred a contemplative life above them, and shall not Christians much more? the Prophet calls them *thick clay*, which will sooner break the back, than lighten the heart; they cannot better the soul, they cannot enrich the soul. Ah! how many thred-bare souls are to be found under silken cloaks and gownes, how often are worldly Riches like hang-men, they hide mens faces with a covering, that they may not see their owne end, and then they hang them. And if they do not hang you, they will shortly leave you, they make themselves wings, and fly away; when one was a commending the Riches and Wealth of Merchants; I do not love that Wealth, said a Heathen, that hangs upon Ropes, if they break, the Ship miscarrieth, and

and all is loſt. Hee is rich enough (ſaith *Jerome*) that lacketh not bread, and high enough in dignity that is not forced to ſerve.

This worlds Wealth that men ſo much deſire
May well be likened to a burning fire,
Whereof a little can do little harm,
But profit much our bodies well to warm,
But take too much, and ſurely thou ſhalt burn,
So too much Wealth, to too much woe does turn.

It was an excellent ſaying of *Lewis* of *Bauyer*, Emperour of *Germany* (*hujuſmodi comparandæ ſunt opes, quæ cum naufragio ſimul enatent*) ſuch goods are worth getting and owning, as will not ſink or waſh away, if a Shipwrack happen, but will wade and ſwim out with us; we ſee ſuch are the ſpiritual Riches that will attend thoſe, who in the ſpring and morning of their youth, ſhall know the Lord, and ſerve the Lord; and get an intereſt in the Lord; and thus much for the third Motive.

4 Motive.

The fourth Motive to provoke young ones to be really good betimes, is to consider, that *The present time, the present day, is the onely season that you are sure of.*

Time past cannot be recalled, and time to come cannot be ascertained. *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* Behold now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation; some there be that trifle away their time, and fool away their souls, and their salvation; to prevent this, the Apostle beats upon the τό νῦν, the present opportunity, because if that be once past, there is no recovering of it; therefore as the Mariner takes the first fair wind to sail; and as the Merchant takes his first opportunity of buying and selling; and as the Husbandman takes the first opportunity of sowing and reaping; so should young men take the present season, the present day (which is their day) to bee good towards the

Heb. 3. 15.

2 Cor. 6. 2. The whole Earth hangs on a point, so doth Heaven and Eternity on an inch of opportunity.

the Lord, to ſeek him, and ſerve him, and not to poſt off the preſent ſeaſon, for they know not what another day, another hour, another moment may bring forth: that door of grace that is open to day, may be ſhut to morrow: that golden Scepter of mercy that is held forth in the Goſpel this day, may be taken in the next day; that love that this hour is upon the bare knee, intreating and beſeeching young men to break off their ſins by repentance, to return to the Lord, to lay hold on his ſtrength, and be at peace with him, may the next hour be turned into wrath. Iſa. 27 4, 5

Ah! the noble motions that have been loſt, the good purpoſes that have withered, the immortal ſouls that have miſcarried, by putting off the preſent ſeaſon, the preſent day. *Paul* diſcourſing before *Felix* of Righteouſneſſe, and Temperance, and Judgement to come, and in this diſcourſe ſtriking at two ſpecial vi- Act. 24. 25

ces that *Felix* was particularly guilty of, he falls a trembling, and being upon the wrack to hear ſuch Doctrine, hee bids *Paul* depart for that time, and hee would call for him at a convenient ſeaſon; here *Felix* neglects his preſent ſeaſon, and we never read, that ever after this hee found a convenient time or ſeaſon to hear *Paul* make an end of the ſubject he had begun! So Chriſt made a very fair offer to the Young man in the Goſpel, *Goe and ſell that thou haſt, and give to the poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in Heaven*; here Chriſt offers heavenly treaſures, for earthly treaſures; unmixt treaſures for mixt treaſures; perfect treaſures, for imperfect treaſures; ſatisfying treaſures, for unſatisfying treaſures; laſting treaſures, for fading treaſures; but the young man ſlips his opportunity, his ſeaſon, and goes away ſorrowful, and we never read more of him.

Mat. 21. 22, 23, 24.

Ah! Young men, young men, do

do not put off the preſent ſeaſon, do not neglect the preſent day; there is no time yours, but the preſent time, no day yours, but the preſent day; and therefore do not pleaſe your ſelves, and feed your ſelves with hopes of time to come, and that you will repent, but not yet; and lay hold on mercy, but not yet; and give up your ſelves to the Lord next week, next moneth, or next year; for that God that hath promiſed you mercy and favour, upon the day of your return, hee hath not promiſed to prolong your live, till that day comes; when a Souldier was brought before *Lamachus*, a Commander, for a miſ-behaviour, and pleaded hee would do ſo no more, *Lamachus* anſwered (*non licet in bello bis peccare*) no man muſt offend twice in Warre; So God (eſpecially in theſe Goſpel-daies, wherein the motions of Divine Juſtice are more ſmart and quick, than in former daies) happily will not

Often conſider what the damned would give (were it in their hands) for one ſeaſon of grace, for one opportunity of mercy.

Heb. 3. 2.

ſuffer men twice to neglect the day of grace, and let ſlip the ſeaſon of mercy.

Ah! young men, young men, you ſay you will be good towards the Lord, before you dye, but if you are not good towards the Lord to day, you may die to morrow, nay, juſtice may leave him to be his own executioner to morrow, who will not repent, nor ſeek the Lord to day. I have read of a certain young man, who being admoniſhed of the evil of his way and courſe, and preſſed to leave his wickedneſſe, by the conſideration of death, judgement, and eternity that was a coming, he anſwered, what do you tell mee of theſe things, I will do well enough, for when death comes, I will ſpeak but three words, and will help all; and ſo ſtill he went on in his ſinful waies, but in the end coming to a bridge on horſe-back, to go over a deep water, the horſe ſtumbling, and he labouring to recover his horſe,

but

but could not, at laſt hee let go the bridle, and gave up himſelf and horſe to the waters, and was heard to ſay theſe three words, Devil take all. Here was three dreadful words indeed, and an example (with a witneſſe) for all young men to beware, who think to repent with a three-word repentance at laſt.

Diabolus capiat omnia.

Otho the Emperour ſlew himſelf with his own hands, but ſlept ſo ſoundly the night before, that the grooms of his chamber heard him ſnort.

Plutarch reporteth the like of *Cato.*

Young men, I will ſuppoſe you to be good accountants; now if you pleaſe to count the number, and mark the age of the Sacrifices in the Old Teſtament, you ſhall finde more Kids and Lambs offered, than Goats, and old Sheep: You have no leaſe of your lives, you are not ſure that you ſhall live to *Iſaack*'s age, to live till your eyes wax dim; you are not ſure that you ſhall live to *Jacob's* years, and die, leaning upon

Gen. 27. 1.

Heb. 11. 21.

Job 36.14

on the top of a ſtaff. You read of them who die in their youth, and whoſe lives are among the unclean. Slip not the preſent ſeaſon, neglect not this day of grace, let not Satan keep your ſouls and Chriſt any longer aſunder, by telling of you, that you are too young, that hereafter will bee time enough. *Auſtine* tells us, that by this very temptation the Devil kept him off from receiving of Chriſt, from cloſing with Chriſt ſeven years together; hee could no ſooner think of inquiring after Chriſt, of getting an intereſt in Chriſt, of leaving off his ſinful courſes, &c. but Satan would be ſtill a ſuggeſting, thou art too young to leave thy drunkenneſſe, thou art too young to leave thy Dalilahs, to leave thy Harlots, till at laſt hee cryed out, how long ſhall I ſay it is too ſoon? why may I not repent to day? and lay hold on Jeſus Chriſt to day? &c. Ah young men! this is your day, this

As out of the boughs of a tree are taken wedges to cleave it in peeces, ſo out of our own luſts, *Satan* works Engines to deſtroy us.

this is your ſeaſon, if you will not now hearken and obey, you may periſh for ever. *Caſar* had a letter given him by *Artemidorus*, that morning hee went to the Senate, wherein notice was given him of all the conſpiracy of his murtherers; ſo that with eaſe he might have prevented his death, but neglecting the reading of it, was ſlain, he ſlipt his ſeaſon, and dies for it. Ah! how many for ſlipping gracious ſeaſons and opportunities, have died for ever? Soul opportunities are more worth than a thouſand worlds; mercy is in them, grace and glory is in them, heaven and eternity is in them.

5 Motive.

Fifthly, To provoke you to bee good betimes, Conſider

How juſt it is with God to reſerve the dregs of his wrath for them, who reſerve the dregs of their daies for him.

How

How can a husband imbrace that wife in her old age, who hath ſpent all the time of her youth, in following after ſtrangers? Will any man receive ſuch into his ſervice, who hath all their daies ſerved his enemies, & received ſuch wounds, blows, and bruiſes, that renders them unfit for his ſervice?

Deut. 32 6

Ah! young men, young men, *do not thus fooliſhly and unwiſely requite the Lord*, for all his patient waiting, his gracious wooing, and his mereiful dealing with you. Ah! do not put off God to old age, for old, lame, and ſick Sacrifices rarely reach as high as heaven. Is not old age very unteachable; in old age are not men very unapt to take in, and as unapt to give out? In old age (oftentimes) men are men, and no men, they have eyes, but ſee not; ears, but hear not; tongues, but ſpeak not, feet, but walk not. An aged man is but a moving Anatomy or a living mortuary; now how unlovely, how uncomely, how un-

Multa ſenem circumveniunt incommoda, Horatius. Many are the inconveniences that do encompaſs an Old man.

unworthy, nay, how incenſing, how provoking a thing muſt this needs bee, when men will dally with God, and put him off till their doting daies have overtaken them, till their ſpring is paſt, their Summer overpaſt, and they arrived at the fall of the leaf, yea, till winter colours have ſtained their heads with gray and hoary hairs? How provoking this is, you may ſee in thoſe ſad words of *Jeremiah*, Jer. 22.21,22. *I ſpake unto thee in thy proſperity, but thou ſaidſt, I will not hear; this hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyeſt not my voice*: But will God put up this at their hands? no, therefore it follows in the next verſe, *Surely thou ſhalt bee aſhamed and confounded for all thy wickedneſſe.*

The reproach of the evil of wickedneſs is not to bee added to old age. (*Solet enim ſenectus eſſe deformis, infirma obliviosa, edentula, lucroſa, indocilis & moleſta*) ſaith *Plutarch*, in *Apothegm. Rom.* For old age uſeth to bee deformed, weak, forgetful, toothleſſe, covetous, unteachable, unquiet.

Oh that young men would let this Scripture lye warm every morning upon their hearts, that ſo they may not dare to put off God, and provoke him to their own confuſion; though you are young, and in your ſtrength, yet

yet are you ſtronger than God; can you make your party good with him? if you will needs bee a provoking, provoke them that are your matches, and do not contend with him that is mightier than you, that can command you into nothing, or into Hell at pleaſure.

6 Motive.

Sixthly, conſider, *That the ſooner you are gooden earth, the greater will be your reward in Heaven.*

Pſa. 58. 11. Gen. 15. 1. Pſa. 19. 11. Mat. 5. 12. Heb. 10. 35. Joh. 2. 8.

The ſooner you are gracious, the more at laſt you will be glorious; you read in the Scripture, of a reward, of a great reward, and of a full reward; now, *thoſe that are good betimes*, that know, ſeek, ſerve, and love the Lord in the ſpring and morning of their youth, they are in the faireſt way of gaining the greateſt, and the fulleſt reward.

And this I ſhall make clear, by that which follows.

Firſt, The ſooner any man begins to be really good, the more

more good hee will do in this world. Now the more good any man doth on earth, the more glory hee ſhall have in Heaven. Therefore my beloved Brethren, *Be yee ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, alwaies abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as you know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* 1 Cor. 15. 58.

Mans wages, mans reward ſhall bee according to his works; hee that doth moſt work here, ſhall have moſt reward hereafter. God will at laſt proportion the one to the other, the reward to the work, *Hee which ſoweth ſparingly, ſhall reap ſparingly, and hee which ſoweth bountifully, ſhall reap bountifully.* 2 Cor. 9. 6. Though no man ſhall be rewarded for his works; yet God will at laſt meaſure out happineſſe and bleſſedneſſe to his people, according to their ſervice, faithfulneſſe, diligence, and work in this world. Grace is glory in the bud, and glory is grace at the full; glory is nothing elſe but a bright conſtellation of graces, Rom. 2. 5, 6, 7.

hap-

happineſſe, nothing but the quinteſſence of holineſſe. Grace and glory differ (*non ſpecie, ſed gradu*) in degree, not in kind, as the learned ſpeak. Grace and glory differ very little, the one is the ſeed, the other is the flower; grace is glory militant, and glory is grace triumphant; and a man may as well plead for equall degrees of grace in this world, as hee may plead for equal degrees of glory in the other world. Surely the more grace here, the more glory hereafter, and the more work Chriſtians do on earth, the more glory they ſhall have in Heaven; and the ſooner men begin to be good, the more good they will do in this world; and the more they do here, the more they ſhall have hereafter. Philoſophers ſeem to weigh our virtues with our vices, and according to the preponderation of either, denominate us good or bad, and ſo deliver us up to reward or puniſhment.

No

No man can commend good Works magnificently enough, (ſaith *Luther*) for one work of a Chriſtian is more precious than Heaven and Earth; and therefore all the world cannot ſufficiently reward one good work. And in another place, ſaith the ſame Author, if I might have my deſire, I would rather chuſe the meaneſt work of a Countrey Chriſtian (or poor maid) than all the victories and triumphs of *Alexander* the Great, and of *Julius Ceſar*.

And again, Whatſoever the Saints do, though never ſo ſmall and mean, it is great and glorious, becauſe they do all in Faith, and by the Word, ſaith the ſame Author. To prevent miſtakes, you muſt remember, that the works that Jeſus Chriſt will reward at laſt, are ſupernatural works: they are, 1 Works of God. 2 Wrought from God, 3 For God, 4 In God, 5 According to God, they are works that flow from ſupernatural Principles, and

they are directed to ſupernatural ends, and performed in a ſupernatural way; now, the ſooner a man beginnes to be good, the more hee will abound in theſe good works, and the more doubtleſſe any man abounds in ſuch good works on earth, the greater reward hee ſhall have in Heaven; yet it muſt not bee forgotten, that the beſt actions, the beſt works of Hypocrites, and all men out of Chriſt, are but (*ſplendida peccata*) fair and ſhining ſins, beautiful abominations. And as the *Phenix* in *Arabia* gathers ſweet odoriferous ſticks together, and then blows them with her wings, and burns her ſelf with them; ſo many a carnal profeſſor burns himſelf with his own good works, that is, by his expecting and truſting to receive that by his works, that is onely to be received and expected from Jeſus Chriſt. Though all that man can do towards the meriting of Heaven, is no more than the lifting up of

David made uſe of his bow, but did not truſt to his bow. The Dove made uſe of her wings, but did not truſt in her wings, but in the Ark.

of a ſtraw towards the meriting of a Kingdome; yet ſuch a proud peece man is, that hee is ready enough to ſay, with proud *Vega*, (*Cœlum gratis non accipiam*) I will not have Heaven of free coſt. A proud heart would fain have that of debt, which is meerly of grace, and deſires that to be of purchaſe, which God hath intended to be of free mercy, which made one to ſay, that hee would ſwimme through a Sea of Brimſtone, that hee might come to Heaven at laſt, but hee that ſwims not thither through the Sea of Chriſts blood, ſhall never come there; man muſt ſwim thither, not through brimſtone, but through blood, or hee miſcarries for ever.

Merces non eſt debita, ſed gratuita.

2 Again, the ſooner a man begins to bee good, the more ſerviceable hee will bee to others, and the more hee will provoke others to good; now all the good that you provoke others to, by Counſel, or Carriage, ſhall bee

put down to your account (as all the ſinnes that men provoke others to, is put down to their accounts; *David* did but ſend a Letter concerning the death of *Uriah*, and the charge commeth, *Thou haſt ſlain Uriah with the Sword*) the more I ſtir up others to ſow, the more at laſt I ſhall reap; the ſooner a man beginnes to bee good, the more good hee will do, the more ſerviceable hee will be in the Towne or City where he dwells, in the Family where he lives, among his Relations (Wife, Children, Kindred, Servants, &c.) with whom he converſes.

2 Sam. 12. 8,9. Iſa. 38. 3. Neh. 13. 14.

Syneſius ſpeaks of ſome, who having a treaſure of rare abilities in them, would as ſoon part with their hearts, as their conceptions; but ſuch are rather monſters than men.

The ſooner a man beginnes to bee gracious, the ſooner and the more uſeful will his arts, his parts, his gifts, his graces, his mercies, his experiences, his life, his labours, his prayers, his counſels, his examples, bee, to all that are with him, to all that are about him.

Lilmod Leſammed, we therefore learn

learn that we may teach, is a Proverb among the *Rabbins*. And I do therefore lay in, and lay up (saith the Heathen) that I may draw forth again, and lay out for the good of many.

Ah! Young men! Young men, as you would be useful and serviceable to many, beginne to bee good betimes, and to lay in, and lay up, and lay out betimes, for the profit and advantage of others. *Augustine* accounted nothing his own, that he did not communicate to others. The Bee doth store her Hive out of all sorts of Flowers, for the common benefit. 'Tis a base and unworthy spirit, for a man to make himself the centre of all his actions. The very Heathen man could say, that a mans Countrey, and his friends, and others challenge a great part of him: And indeed the best way to do our selves good, is to be a doing good to others; the best way to gather, is to scatter; Memorable

morable is that ſtory of *Pyrhias*, a Merchant of *Ithaca*, who at Sea eſpying an aged man, a Captive in a Pirates Ship, took compaſſion of him, and redeemed him, and bought his Commodities which the Pirate had taken from him, which were certain barrels of Pitch; The old man perceiving, that not for any good ſervice hee could do him, nor for the gain of that commodity, but meerly out of charity and pity he had done this, diſcovered a great maſſe of treaſure hidden in the pitch, whereby the Merchant in a very ſhort time became very rich, at which very time God made that Word good; *He that ſoweth liberally, ſhall reap liberally*; and that word, *The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat*; and that word, *The liberal deviſeth liberal things; and by liberal things ſhall he ſtand.* It is fabled of *Midas*, that what ever hee touched, hee turned it into gold: It is certain, that a liberal hand, a liberal

2 Cor. 9. 6.

Pro. 11. 25.

Iſa. 32. 8.

ral heart turnes all into gold, into gain, as Scripture and Experience do abundantly evidence: now if you put all these things together, nothing is more evident, than that those that begin to bé good betimes, are in the ready way, the high way to be high in Heaven, when they shall cease from breathing on earth; and therefore young men, as you would be high in Heaven, as you would have a great reward, a full reward, a massie weighty Crown, O labour to be good betimes! labour to get acquaintance with the Lord, and an interest in the Lord, in the spring and morning of your daies.

7 Motive.

The seventh Motive or Consideration to provoke and incite you to be good betimes, is, *To consider that the Lord is very much affected, and taken with your seeking of him, and following after him in the spring and morning of your youth.*

Go and cry in the ears of *Jerusalem.*

Jer. 2. 2. *ſalem, ſaying, I remember thee, the kindneſs of thy youth, the love of thine eſpouſals, when thou wenteſt after me in the wilderneſs, in a land that was not ſown.*

Ah! how kindly, how ſweetly did the Lord take this at their hands, that they followed him in their youth, while their bones were full of marrow, while they were ſtrong and fit for ſervice, while nature was freſh, lively, and vigorous; In the Law, God called for the firſt of all things, hee required not onely the firſt fruits, but the very firſt of the firſt; The firſt of the firſt-fruits of thy land, *Thou ſhalt bring into the houſe of the Lord thy God.* God is the firſt being, the firſt good, and therefore deſerves the firſt of the firſt, and the beſt of the beſt; the firſt and the beſt is not too good for him, who is goodneſs it ſelf. God in that of *Leviticus* 2. 14. is ſo paſſionately ſet upon having the firſt of the firſt, that hee will not ſtay till the green

Exod. 23. 19.

Tis truly ſaid of God, that hee is *Omnia ſuper omnia.*

green ears of Corn bee ripe, but will have the green ears of Corn dried in the fire, leſt he ſhould loſe his longing.

As many young women, and ſickly children cannot ſtay till the fruit be ripe, but muſt have it while it is green; even ſo ſaith God, my heart, my deſires, are ſo vehemently ſet upon the firſt fruits, the firſt things, that I cannot ſtay, I cannot ſatisfie my ſelf without them; and what would God teach us by all this, but to ſerve him with the firſt-fruits of our age, the prim-roſe of our child-hood, the morning of our youth. God hath given you of the beſt, do not put him off with the worſt, with the worſt of your time, the worſt of your daies, the worſt of your ſtrength, leſt hee ſwear in his wrath, that you ſhall never enter into his reſt.

8 Motive.

The eighth Motive or Conſideration to provoke you to bee good

Early Converts will never have cauſe to ſay, as that deſpairing Pope ſaid, the Croſs could do him no good, becauſe he had ſo often ſold it away.

good betimes, to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the morning of your youth, is, to conſider, that *This may bee a ſpecial means to prevent many black temptations, and an incouragement to withſtand all temptations, that you may meet with from a tempting Devil, and a tempting world.*

An early turning to the Lord will prevent many temptations to deſpair, many temptations to neglect the means openly, to deſpiſe the means ſecretly: many temptations about the being of God, the goodneſs, faithfulneſs, truth, and juſtice of God; temptations to deſpair, temptations to lay violent hands on a mans ſelf; temptations to queſtion all that God hath ſaid, and that Chriſt hath ſuffered, ariſes many times from mens delaying, and putting off of God to the laſt; all which, with many others, are prevented by a mans ſeeking and ſerving of the Lord in the ſpring and morning of his youth. It is reported of the Harts of *Scythia*

thia, that they teach their young ones to leap from Bank to Bank, from Rock to Rock, from one Turf to another (by leaping before them) by which means when they are hunted, no beaſt of prey can ever take them; ſo when perſons exerciſe themſelves in godlineſs, when they are young, when they leap from one meaſure of holineſs to another, when they are in the morning of their daies; Satan that mighty hunter after Souls, may purſue them with his temptations, but hee ſhall not overtake them, hee ſhall not prevail over them. As you ſee in *Moſes*, *Joſeph*, *Daniel*, and the three Children, theſe knew the Lord, and gave up themſelves to the Lord in the prime and Prim-roſe of their Youth; and theſe were all temptation-proof; Satan and the World purſued them, but could not overtake them; when the Devil and the World had done their worſt, the Young mens bows abode

Heb. 11. Gen. 39. Dan. 3. ult.

Gen. 49. 23, 24

bode in ſtrength, and their hands (to reſiſt) were made ſtrong by the hands of the mighty God of *Jacob*. *Ego non ſum ego*, ſaid that young convert, when tempted, I am not the man that I was.

Luther tells of a young Virgin that uſed to reſiſt all temptations, with this, *Chriſtianus ſum*, I am a Chriſtian. Early Converts may ſay, when tempted, as hee, tell mee not Satan what I have been, but what I am, and will bee; or as hee in the like caſe, whatſoever I was, I am now in Chriſt, a new Creature, and that is it which troubleth thee; or, as hee, the more deſperate my diſeaſe was, the more I admire the Phyſician. Yea, thou mayeſt yet ſtrain it a peg higher, and ſay, the greater my ſinnes were, the greater is my honour. As the Devils which once *Mary Magdalen* had, are mentioned for her glory. When *Pyrrhus* tempted *Fabritius* the firſt day with an Elephant, ſo huge and monſtrous

Bernard. Bez. Auguſtin. Such as thou art now, I was once, but ſuch as I am now, thou wilt never be, ſaid *Diogenes* to a baſe fellow that told him, hee had once been a forger of mony.

ſtrous a beaſt, as before he had not ſeen, the next day with mony, and promiſes of honour; he anſwered, I fear not thy force, I am too wiſe, for thy fraud.

Ah! Young men, young men, as you would bee free from the ſaddeſt and darkeſt temptations; and as you would be armed againſt all temptations; O labour as for life, to be good betimes! ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the morning of your youth; no way like this for the preventing earth-quakes, heart-quakes, ſtormy daies, and winter nights, &c.

9 Motive.

The ninth Motive or Conſideration to ſtir up young men to bee good betimes, to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of their youth, is, *To conſider the worth and excellency of ſouls.*

A ſoul is a ſpiritual immortal ſubſtance, it is capable of the knowledge of God, it is capable of union with God, of communion

Luk. 23. 13
Mat. 19. 28
Act. 7. *ult.*

Phil. 1.23 nion with God, and of a bleſſed and happy fruition of God.

Chriſt left his Fathers boſome for the good of ſouls; he aſſumed mans nature for the ſalvation of mans ſoul; Chriſt prayed for ſouls, he ſweat for ſouls, hee wept for ſouls, hee bled for ſouls, hee hung on the Croſs for ſouls, hee trod the Wine-preſs of his Fathers Wrath for ſouls, he died for ſouls, hee roſe again from death for ſouls, hee aſcended for ſouls, hee intercedes for ſouls, and all the glorious preparations that hee hath been a making in Heaven theſe ſixteen hundred years, is for ſouls.

Heb. 2.13, 14, 15, 16

Iſa. 63. 3, 4

Joh. 14. 1, 2, 3

Ah! Young men, young men, doe not play the Courtier with your precious ſouls, the Courtier doth all things late, hee riſes late, dines late, ſups late, goes to bed late, repents late.

Ah! Sirs, the good of your ſouls is before all, and above all other things in the World, to bee

firſt

first regarded and provided for, and that partly, because it is the best and more noble part of man, and partly, because therein mostly and properly is the Image of God stampt, and partly, because it is the first converted, and partly, because it shall be the first and most glorified.

O anima Dei insignita imagine, desponsata fide, donat spiritu. Bern.

Ah! Young men, young men, if they bee worse than Infidels, that make no provision for their Families, what monsters are they that make not provision for their owne souls? this will be bitterness in the end.

1 Tim. 5. 8

Cæsar Borgias being sick to death, lamentingly said, When I lived I provided for every thing but Death; now I must dye, and am unprovided to dye; this was a dart at his heart, and it will at last bee a dagger at yours, who feast your bodies, but starve your souls; who make liberal provision for your ignoble part, but no provision for your more noble part.

It

If they deserve a hanging, who feast their Slaves, and starve their Wives, that make provision for their enemies, but none for their friends; how will you escape hanging in Hell, who make provision for every thing, yea, for your very lusts, but make no provision for your immortal souls? Wee hate the *Turke* for selling Christians for slaves, and what shall wee think then of those who sell themselves, their precious souls, for toyes and trifles that cannot profit? who practically say, what once a prophane Noble man of *Naples* verbally said, *viz.* that hee had two souls in his body, one for God, and another for whosoever would buy it.

Jam. 4. 2, 3 Hos. 7. 13, 14

Callenius relates this story.

Ah! Young men, young men, doe not pawn your souls, doe not sell your souls, doe not exchange away your souls, doe not trifle and fool away your precious souls, they are Jewels, more worth than a thousand worlds, yea, than Heaven and Earth; if they are safe,

all

all is safe; but if they are lost, all is lost, God lost, and Christ lost, and the society of glorious Angels and blessed Saints lost, and Heaven lost, and that for ever. *Grantlensis* tells of a woman that was so affected with souls miscarryings, that shee besought God to stop up the passage into Hell with her soul and body, that none might have entrance.

Ah! that all young persons were so affected with the worth and excellency of their souls, and so allarmed with the hazard and danger of losing their souls, as that they may in the spring and morning of their daies enquire after the Lord, and seek him, and serve him with all their might, that so their precious and immortal souls may be safe and happy for ever; but if all this will not do, then in the last place,

to Motive 10.

Tenthly, Consider, Young men, *That God will at last bring you to a reckoning*; Hee will at

Eccl. 11. 9

last bring you to judgement. *Rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the daies of thy youth, and walk in the waies of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee unto judgement.* In these words you have two things, 1 An ironical concession, hee bids him rejoyce, &c. hee yeelds him what hee would have, by an irony, by way of mockage and bitter scoff. Now thou art young, and strong, lively, and lusty, and thy bones are full of marrow; thou art resolved to bee proud, and scornfull, to indulge the flesh, and to follow thy delights, and pleasure; well, take thy course if thou dares, or if thou hast a minde to it, if thy heart bee so set upon it. *Rejoyce in thy youth, &c.* The second is a commination, or a sad and severe præmonition. But know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgement; will bring thee, these

Hierom still thought that that noise was in his ears (*Surgite mortui, & venite ad judicium*) arise! you dead and come to judgement

these words import two things; first, the unwillingness of youth to come to judgement; secondly, the unavoidableneſſe that youth must come to judgement; but how soon you shall bee brought to judgement, is only known to God.

Augustine confesses in one of his Books, that as long as his Conscience was gnawed with the guilt of some youthful lust, hee was once insnared with, the very hearing of a Day of Judgement, was even a Hell to him.

Histories tell us of a young man, who being for some Capital offence condemned to dye, grew gray in one nights space; and was therefore pittied, and spared.

Ah! Young men, young men, that the serious thoughts of this great Day, may put you upon breaking off the sinnes of your youth; and the dedicating of your selves to the knowledge, love, and service of the Lord, in

the ſpring and flower of your daies. Ah young men, conſider the errours of your lives, the wickedneſſe of your hearts, the ſinfulneſſe of your wayes, and that ſtrict account that ere long you muſt be brought to before the Judge of all the world.

The Heathens themſelves had ſome kinde of dread and expectation of ſuch a day; and therefore when *Paul* ſpake of Judgement to come, *Fœlix* trembled, though a Heathen.

Act. 24. 25

The bringing into judgement is a thing which is known by reaſon, and is clear by the light of Nature; wherefore in *Auſtria* one of the Nobles dying, who had lived fourſcore and thirteen years, and had ſpent all his life in pleaſures and delights, never being troubled with any infirmity, and this being told to *Frederick* the Emperour; from hence, ſaith he, we may conclude, the ſouls immortality; for if there be a God

The Philoſophers had ſome dreams of a ſevere day of account, as appeareth by *Plato's Georgi*, & many paſſages in *Tulli*, &c.

that

that ruleth this world (as Divines and Philoſophers do teach) and that he is juſt, no one denieth; ſurely there are other places to which ſouls after death do go, and do receive for their deeds, either reward, or puniſhment, for here we ſee, that neither rewards are given to the good, nor puniſhments to the evil. *Æneas Sylvius.* 2 Cor. 5. 9, 10, 11.

Ah! Young men, knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord, and the terrour of this day, Oh! that you would be perſwaded to flee from the wrath to come; to caſt away the Idols of your ſouls, to repent and bee converted in the prime-roſe of your youth, that your ſinnes may be bloſted out when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord; or elſe woe, woe to you that ever you were Born. I have read a ſtory of one, who being riſen from the dead, and being asked in what condition hee was, hee made anſwer, no man doth beleeve, no man doth Acts 3. 19.

beleeve, no man doth beleeve. And being further asked what hee meant by that repetition, hee answered, no man doth beleeve, how exactly God examineth, how strictly God judgeth, how severely hee punisheth. Oh that the waies of most young persons did not declare to all the World that they doe not, and that they will not beleeve the dread, and terrour of that day, that will admit of no plea, nor place for Apology or appeal; the highest and last Tribunal, can never bee appealed from, or repealed.

The *Turks* have a tradition, and frantick opinion, that wicked men shall at the great day carry their sinnes in latchets after their Captain *Cain*, but well would it be for them, if this should be all their punishment in that great day.

Now if for all that hath been said, you are resolved to spend the flower of your daies, and the prime of your strength, in the service of sin and the World, then know, that no tongue can expresse, no heart can conceive that trouble of minde, that terrour of soul, that horrour of conscience, that fear and amazement, that weeping and wailing, that crying and roaring, that sighing and groaning, that

that cursing and banning, that stamping and tearing, that wringing of hands, and gnashing of teeth, that certainly shall attend you, when God shall bring you into judgement for all your looseness, and lightness, for all your wickedness, and wantonness, for all your prophaneness, and baseness, for all your neglect of God, your grieving the Comforter, your trampling under foot the bloud of a Saviour, for your despising of the means, for your prizing earth above heaven, and the pleasures of this World above the pleasures that bee at Gods right hand.

Oh! how will you wish in that day when your sins shall be charged on you, when justice shall bee armed against you, when Conscience shall bee gnawing within you, when the World shall bee a flaming Fire about you, when the gates of Heaven shall be shut against you, and the flame of Hell ready to take hold of you, when

Chrysostom speaking of this day, saith, for Christ at this day to say, depart from me, is a thing more terrible than a thousand Hels, *Chry. Hom. ad Pop. Antioch.*

Angels and Saints ſhall ſit in judgement upon you, and for ever turn their faces from you, when evil ſpirits ſhall be terrifying of you, and Jeſus Chriſt for ever diſowning of you, how will you (I ſay) wiſh in that day that you had never been born, or that you might now bee unborn, or that your mothers wombs had proved your Tombs? O how will you then wiſh to be turned into a bird, a beaſt, a ſtock, a ſtone, a Toad, a Tree! O that our immortal ſouls were mortal, O that wee were nothing, O that wee were any thing but what wee are.

Joan. Damaſc. & Author. Anonym. de quat. Noviſſ. Impreſſ. Daven. Ann. 1494.

I have read a remarkable ſtory of a King, that was heavy, and ſad, and wept, which when his Brother ſaw, he asked him why hee was ſo penſive? becauſe (ſaith he) I have judged others, and now I muſt be judged my ſelf: And why (ſaith his brother) do you ſo take on for this, it will (happily) bee a long time ere

ere that day come, and beſides that, it is but a ſleight matter. The King ſaid little to it for the preſent.

Now it was a cuſtome in that Countrey, when any had committed Treaſon, there was a Trumpet ſounded at his door in the night time, and he was next day brought out to be executed, now the King commanded a Trumpet to be ſounded at his brothers door in the night time, who awakening out of his ſleep, when he heard it, aroſe, and came quaking and trembling to the King; How now, ſaith the King? what's the matter you are ſo affrighted? I am, ſaith hee, attached of Treaſon, and next morning I ſhall bee executed; why, ſaith the King to him again, are you ſo troubled at that, knowing that you ſhall be judged by your Brother, and for a matter that your Conſcience tells you, you are clear of? How much more therefore may I bee afraid, ſeeing that

that God shall judge mee, and not in a matter that my Conscience frees me of, but of that whereof I am guilty? and beside this, if the worst come, it is but a temporary death you shall die, but I am liable to death eternal both of body and soul. I will leave the Application to those young persons, that put this day afar off, and whom no arguments will move to be good betimes, and to acquaint themselves with the Lord in the morning of their youth.

But now to those young men and women who begin to seek, serve, and love the Lord in the prime-rose of their daies, the day of judgement will bee to them (*melodia in aura, jubilum in corde*) like musick in the ear, and a jubilee in the heart, this day will bee to them, a day of refreshing, a day of redemption, a day of vindication, a day of Coronation, a day of Consolation, a day of Salvation, it will be to them a Marriage day, a Harvest day,

Act. 3. 19, 20, 21, 22. Mic. 7. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Rev. 19 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Mat. 25. 34. to v. 41

a

a pay day: Now the Lord will pay them for all the prayers they have made, for all the Sermons they have heard, for all the tears they have ſhed; in this great day Chriſt will remember all the individual Offices of Love and Friendſhip ſhewed to any of his, now he will mention many things for their honour and comfort that they never minded, now the leaſt and loweſt acts of love and pity towards his, ſhall bee interpreted as a ſpecial kindneſſe ſhewed to himſelf. Now the Crown ſhall bee ſet upon their heads, and the Royal Robe put upon their backs, now all the World ſhall ſee that they have not ſerved the Lord for naught: Now Chriſt will paſs over all their weakneſſes, and make honourable mention of all the ſervices they have performed, of all the mercies they have improved, and of all the great things that for his name and glory, they have ſuffered.

2 Tim. 4. 8
Mal. 3. 17, 18.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Quest. BUt here an apt queſtion may be moved, *viz.* *whether at this great day, the ſins of the Saints ſhall be brought into the judgement of diſcuſſion and diſcovery or no, whether the Lord will in this day publiquely manifeſt; proclaim, and make mention of the ſins of his people, or no?*

I humbly judge according to my preſent light, that he will not; and my reaſons for it are theſe, *viz.*

The firſt is drawn from Chriſts judicial proceedings in the laſt day, ſet down largely and clearly in the 25. of *Matthew*, where he inumerateth onely the good works they had done, but takes no notice of the ſpots and blots, of the ſtains and blemiſhes, of the infirmities, and enormities, of the weaknesſes and wickednesſes of his people. My

Deut. 32. 4,5,6.

Second Reaſon is taken from Chriſts vehement proteſtations, that

that they ſhall not come into judgment, John 5. 24. *Verily, Verily, I ſay unto you, he that heareth my word, and beleeveth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death unto life.* Thoſe words, ſhall not come into condemnation, are not rightly tranſlated, the Original is οὐκ κρίσιν, ſhall not come into judgement, not into damnation, as you read it in all your Engliſh Books. I will not ſay what ſhould put men upon this expoſition, rather than a true tranſlation of the Original word; further, it is very obſervable, that no Evangeliſt uſeth this double aſſeveration, but *John*, and he never uſeth it but in matters of greateſt weight and importance, and to ſhew the earneſtneſſe of his ſpirit, and to ſtir us up to better attention, and to put the thing aſſerted out of all queſtion, and beyond all contradiction; as when wee would put a thing for ever out of all queſtion, we do it

Vide Aquin. 87. Suppl. Eſt. in l. 4. Sen. diſt. 47.

Joh. 1. 51. ch. 3. 3. 11 ch. 6. 26. 32. 47. 53. &c.

it by a double asseveration, verily, verily, 'tis so, &c.

Thirdly, because his not bringing their sinnes into judgement, doth most and best agree with many precious and glorious expressions that wee finde scattered (as so many shining sparkling Pearls) up and down in Scripture; as First, With those of Gods blotting out the sinnes of his People. Isa.43.25. *I, even I am hee that blotteth out thy transgressions for my owne sake, and will not remember thy sins.* Isa.44.22. *I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sinnes.* Who is this that blots out transgressions? hee that hath the keyes of Heaven and Hell, at his girdle, that opens and no man shuts, that shuts and no man opens, hee that hath the power of life and death, of condemning and absolving, of killing and making alive, hee it is that blots out transgressions; if an under Officer should blot out an indictment, that perhaps might

might do a man no good, a man might for all that bee at laſt caſt by the Judge; but when the Judge or King ſhall blot out the indictment with their own hand, then the indictment cannot return; now this is every Beleevers caſe and happineſs.

Secondly, To thoſe glorious expreſſions of Gods not remembring of their ſinnes any more, Iſa. 43. 25. *And I will not remember thy ſinnes; And they ſhall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord, for they ſhall all know mee from the leaſt of them, to the greateſt of them, ſaith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their ſinne no more.* So the Apoſtle, *For I will bee merciful to their unrighteouſneſſe, and their ſinnes, and their iniquities will I remember no more.* Jer. 31. 34. Heb. 8. 12.

And again, the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, *This is the Covenant that I will make with them, after thoſe daies,*

daies, saith the Lord, *I will put my Laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them: and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

Heb 10. 17 That which *Cicero* said flatteringly of *Cæsar*, is truly affirmed of God, *Nihil oblivisci solet præter injurias*, hee forgetteth nothing but the wrongs that daily are done him by his.

The meaning is, their iniquities shall quite be forgotten, I will never mention them more, I will never take notice of them more, they shall never hear more of them from mee, though God hath an iron memory to remember the sinnes of the wicked; yet hee hath no memory to remember the sinnes of the Righteous.

Thirdly, His not bringing their Sinnes into judgement doth most and best agree with those blessed expressions, of his casting their Sinnes into the depth of the Sea; and of his casting them behinde his back. *Hee will turn again, hee will have compassion upon us, hee will subdue our Iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sinnes into the depths of the Sea*, where sinne is once pardoned, the remission

Mic 7. 19.

stands

ſtands never to bee repealed, pardoned ſinnes ſhall never come in account againſt the pardoned man; before God any more, for ſo much doth this borrowed ſpeech import: if a thing were caſt into a River, it might bee brought up again, or if it were caſt upon the Sea, it might bee diſcerned, and taken up again; but when it is caſt into the depths, the bottome of the Sea, it can never be boyed up again.

By the Metaphor in the Text the Lord would have us to know, the ſinnes pardoned ſhall riſe no more, they ſhall never be ſeen more, they ſhall never come on the account more; he will ſo drown their ſinnes, that they ſhall never come up before him the ſecond time.

And ſo much that other Scripture imports. *Behold, for Peace I had great Bitterneſſe, but thou haſt in love to my ſoul delivered it from the pit of Corrup-* Iſa. 38. 17.

ruption; for thou haſt caſt all my ſins behind thy back; theſe laſt words are a borrowed ſpeech, taken from the manner of men, who are wont to caſt behinde their backs, ſuch things as they have no minde to ſee, regard, or remember. A gracious ſoul hath alwaies his ſinnes before his face (*I acknowledge my*
Pſal. 51. 3. *tranſgreſſions, and my ſin is ever before me*;) and therefore no wonder if the Lord caſt them behinde his back. The Father ſoon forgets, and caſts behinde his back thoſe faults that the childe remembers, and hath alwayes in his eyes; ſo doth the Father of ſpirits.

Fourthly, *His not bringing their ſinnes into judgement*, doth beſt agree with that ſweet and choice expreſſion of Gods pardoning the ſinnes of his people; *And I will cleanſe them from all their*
Jer. 33. 8. *iniquity, whereby they have ſinned againſt me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have ſinned, and whereby they have tranſgreſſed againſt mee.* So *Micha*,

Who

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passes by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage (as though he would not see it, but wink at it) *hee retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in Mercy.* The Hebrew word (*Nose* from *Nasa*) that is here rendered, pardoneth, signifies a taking away; when God pardons sin, he takes it sheer away, that if it should be sought for, yet it could not be found, as the Prophet speaks: *In those daies, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve*; and these words, *and passeth by*, in the (aforecited) seventh of *Micha*, and the 18. according to the Hebrew (*Vegnober Gnal*) is, and *passeth over, God passeth over the transgression of his heritage*; that is, hee takes no notice of it; as a man in a deep muse, or as one that hath haste of business, seeth

Mic. 7. 18.

Jer. 50. 20.

עבר *Gnabar*, he passed over.

not things before him, his minde being busied about other matters, he neglects all to minde his businesse. As *David* when hee saw in *Mephibosheth* the feature of his friend *Jonathan*, took no notice of his lamenesse, or any other defect, or deformity: So God beholding in his people the glorious image of his Son, winks at all their faults and deformities, which made *Luther* say, *do with me what thou wilt, since thou hast pardoned my sin*; and what is it to pardon sin, but not to mention sin?

Isa. 40. 1, 2

Fifthly, *In his not bringing their sinnes into the judgement of Discussion and Discovery*, Doth best agree to those expressions of Forgiving, and covering; *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.* In the Original it is in the plural, Blessednesses, loe, here is a plurality of blessings, a chain of pearls.

Psal. 32. 1.

The like expression you have in the 85. *Psalme*, and the 2 *verse*.

Thou

Thou haſt forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou haſt covered all their ſin. Selah. For the underſtanding of theſe Scriptures aright, take notice, that to cover, is a Metaphorical expreſſion, covering is ſuch an action, which is oppoſed to diſcloſure; to be covered, is to be ſo hid and cloſed, as not to appear. Some make the Metaphor from filthy loathſome objects, which are covered from our eyes, as dead carkaſſes are buried under the ground; ſome from Garments, that are put upon us to cover our nakedneſſe; others from the Egyptians that were drowned in the red Sea, and ſo covered with water; others from a great gulf in the earth, that is filled up and covered with earth, injected into it; and others make it in the laſt place an alluſive expreſſion to the mercy-ſeat, over which was a covering. Now all theſe Metaphors in the general, tend to ſhew this, that the Lord will not look, hee will not

Sic velantur, ut in judicio non revelentur.

ſee, hee will not take notice of the ſins hee hath pardoned, to call them any more to a judicial account.

As when a Prince reads over many treaſons, and rebellions, and meets with ſuch and ſuch which hee hath pardoned, hee reads on, hee paſſeth by, hee takes no notice of them, the pardoned perſon ſhall never hear more of them, hee will never call him to account for thoſe ſinnes more. So here, &c. When *Cæſar* was painted, hee put his finger upon his ſcar, his wart. God puts his fingers upon all his peoples ſcars and warts, upon all their weakneſſes and infirmities, that nothing can be ſeen, but what is fair and lovely; *Thou art all fair, my Love, and there is no ſpot in thee,* Cant. 4. 7.

Sixthly, It beſt agrees to that expreſſion of not imputing of ſin. *Bleſſed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile.* So the Apoſtle in that *Rom.* 4. 6, 7, 8. now

Pſal. 32. 2.

not

not to impute iniquity, is not to charge iniquity, not to ſet iniquity upon his ſcore, who is bleſſed and pardoned, &c.

Seventhly and laſtly, it beſt agrees with that expreſſion that you have in the 103. *Pſalme*, and the 11, and 12 *Verſes*. *For as the Heaven is high above the Earth, ſo great is his mercy towards them that fear him: As far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far hath he removed our tranſgreſſions from us.* What a vaſt diſtance is there betwixt the Eaſt and the Weſt? of all viſible latitudes, this is the greateſt; and thus much for the third Argument. The

Fourth Argument, that prevails with me, to judge that Jeſus Chriſt will not bring the ſins of the ſaints into the judgement of diſcuſſion, and diſcovery in the great day, is, becauſe it ſeems unſuitable to three conſiderable things, for Jeſus Chriſt to proclaim the infirmities and miſcarriages of his people to all the world.

First, it seems to bee unsuitable to the glory and solemnity of that day, which to the Saints will be a day of refreshing, a day of restitution, a day of redemption, a day of coronation, as hath been already proved; now how suitable to this great day of solemnity, the proclamation of the Saints sinnes will be, I leave the Reader to judge.

Secondly, It seems unsuitable to all those near and dear relations, that Jesus Christ stands in towards his, he stands in the relation of a *Father, a Brother, a Head, a Husband, a Friend, an Advocate*: Now are not all these by the Law of relations, bound rather to hide and keep secret (at least from the world) the weaknesses and infirmities of their near and dear relations, and is not Christ? is not Christ much more? By how much he is more a *Father, a Brother, a Head, a Husband, &c.* in a spiritual way, than any others can be in a natural way, &c.

Isa. 9. 6. Heb. 2. 11, 12. Ephes. 1. 21, 22. Rev. 19. 7. John 15. 1. Joh. 2. 1, 2.

Third-

Thirdly, It ſeems very unſuitable to what the Lord Jeſus requires of his in this World, the Lord requires that his people ſhould caſt a mantle of love, of wiſdome, of ſilence, and ſecreſie over one anothers weakneſſes and infirmities.

Hatred ſtirreth up ſtrifes, but love covereth all ſins; Loves mantle is very large; love will finde a hand: a plaiſter to clap upon every ſore, *Flavius Veſpaſianus* (the Emperour) was very ready to conceal his friends Vices, and as ready to reveal their Vertues: So is Divine love in the hearts of the Saints; *If thy Brother offend thee, goe and tell him his fault between him and thee alone; if hee ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother.* As the Pills of reprehenſion are to bee gilded, and ſugred over with much gentleneſs, and ſoftneſs; ſo they are to bee given in ſecret, tell him between him and thee alone. Tale-bearers, and Tale-hearers are alike abominable.

Pro. 10. 12
1 Pet. 4. 8

Mat. 18. 15

Heaven

Heaven is too hot, and too holy a place for them, *Psal.* 15. 3. Now will Jesus Christ have us carry it thus towards offending Christians, and will hee himself act otherwise? nay, is it an evil in us to lay open the weaknesses and infirmities of the Saints to the World? and will it bee an excellency, a glory, a vertue in Christ, to doe it in the great day? &c.

A fifth Argument is this, It is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to passe over a transgression*, or to pass by it, as wee doe by persons or things, wee know not, or would take no notice of. Now *it is the glory of a man to passe over a transgression*, and will it not much more bee the glory of Christ, silently to passe over the transgressions of his people, in that great Day? The greater the treasons and rebellions are that a Prince passes over, and takes no notice of, the more is it his ho-

Prov. 19. 11

Non amo quenquam nisi offendam, said a Heathen.

honour and glory; and ſo doubtleſs it will bee Chriſts in that great day, to paſs over all the treaſons and rebellions of his people, to take no notice of them, to forget them, as well as to forgive them.

The Heathens have long ſince obſerved, that in nothing man came nearer to the glory and perfection of God himſelf, than in goodneſs and clemency. Surely if it be ſuch an honour to man, *to paſs over a tranſgreſſion*, it cannnot bee a diſhonour to Chriſt, to paſs over the tranſgreſſions of his people, he having already buried them in the Sea of his blood. Again ſaith *Solomon*, *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing*. And why it ſhould not make for the glory of Divine love to conceal the ſins of the Saints in that great Day, I know not: and whether the concealing the ſinnes of the Saints in that great day, will not make moſt for their joy, and wicked mens ſorrow, for their comfort, and wicked mens terrour and torment, I will leave you to Prov. 25. 2

to judge, and time and experience to decide; And thus much for the resolution of that great question, Having done with the Motives that may incourage and provoke Young Men to be good betimes, to know, love, seek, and serve the Lord, in the spring and morning of their daies.

CHAP. VI.

I Shall now come to those directions and helps, that must (by assistance from Heaven) bee put in practice, if ever you would be good betimes, and serve the Lord in the prim-rose of your daies. Now all that I shall say, will fall under these two heads.

First, *Some things you must carefully, and warily decline, and arme your selves against*, and

Secondly, *There are other things that you must prosecute and follow.*

First, *There are some things that you must warily decline*, and they are these.

1 Di-

1 Direction.

First, *If ever you would bee good betimes, if you would bee gracious in the ſpring and morning of your youth, Oh! then take heed of putting the day of death far from you.* Amos 6. 3

Young men are very prone to look upon death afar off, and put it at a great diſtance from them; they are apt to ſay to Death, as *Pharaoh* ſaid to *Moſes*, *Get thee from mee, and let mee ſee thy face no more*; Exo. 10. 28 if old men diſcourſe to them of death, they are ready to anſwer, as the High-Prieſt did *Judas* (in a different caſe) *What is that to us, look you unto it*: Mat. 27. 4 we know ſickneſs will come, and death is a debt that wee muſt all pay, but ſurely theſe gueſts are a great way from us, for doth not *David* ſay, *The daies of a man are threeſcore years and ten?* Pſa. 90. 10 We have calculated our Nativities, and we cannot abate a day, a minute, a moment, of *threeſcore and ten*; and therefore it is even a death to us to think of death, there being ſo great a diſtance between our birth-

day

day, and our dying day, as we have caſt up the account.

Ah young men! it is ſad, it is very ſad, when you are ſo wittily wicked, as to ſay with thoſe in *Ezekiel*, *Behold they of the houſe of Iſrael ſay, the viſion that he ſeeth is for many daies to come, and hee propheſieth of the times that are afarre off.*

Ezek. 12. 27

Ah! Young men, young men, by putting far away this day, you gratifie Satan, you ſtrengthen ſin, you provoke the Lord, you make the work of faith and repentance more hard and difficult; you lay a ſad foundation for the greateſt fears and doubts.

Ah! How ſoon may that ſad word bee fulfilled upon you. *The Lord of that ſervant, that ſaith his Lord delayeth his comming, ſhall come in a day when hee looketh not for him; and in an houre that hee is not aware of, and ſhall cut him aſunder* (or cut him off) *and appoint him his portion with Hypocrites, there ſhall bee weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.*

Mat. 24. 48, 49, 50, 51

teeth. When *Sodom*, when *Pharaoh*, when *Agag*, when *Amaleck*, when *Haman*, when *Herod*, when *Nebuchadnezzar*, when *Belshazzar*, when *Dives*, when the Fool in the Gospel, were all in their prime, their pride, when they were all in a flourishing state, and upon the very top of their glory, how strangely, how suddenly, how sadly, how fearfully, how wonderfully, were they brought down to the Grave, to Hell!

Ah young man! who art thou, and what is thy name or fame, what is thy power or place, what is thy dignity or glory, that thou dareſt promiſe thy ſelf an exemption from ſharing in as ſad a portion as ever Juſtice gave to thoſe who were once very high, who were ſeated among the Starres, but are now brought down to the ſides of the pit? I have read a Story of one, that gave a young Prodigal a Ring with a Deaths head, on this condition, that hee ſhould one hour daily for ſeven daies

Iſa. 13. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

daies together, look and think upon it: which bred a great change in his life.

Ah Young men! the serious thoughts of death may doe that for you, that neither friends, counsel, examples, prayers, sermons, tears have not done to this very day. Well, remember this, to labour not to dye, is labour in vain, and to put this day farre from you, and to live without fear of death, is to dye living. Death seizeth on old men, and laies wait for the youngest. Death is oftentimes as neare to the young mans back as it is to the old mans face.

Senibus mors in januis, adolescentibus in insidiis, Bern. De convers. ad Cler. c. 14.

It is storied of *Charls* the fourth King of *France*, that being one time affected with the sense of his many and great sins, he fetcht a deep sigh, and said to his Wife, By the help of God, I will now so carry my self all my life long, that I will never offend him more; which words he had no sooner uttered, but hee fell down dead and died.

Doe

Do not young men put this day far from you, leſt you are ſuddenly ſurprized, and then you cry out, (when too late) *a Kingdome for a Chriſt, a Kingdome for a Chriſt*; as once Crookt-back *Richard* the Third in his Diſtreſſe, *a Kingdome for a horſe, a Kingdome for a horſe.*

Ah young men! did you never hear of a young man that cryed out; *Oh! I am ſo ſick, that I cannot live, and yet* (woful wretch that I am) *ſo ſinful, that I dare not dye; Oh that I might live! Oh that I might dye! Oh that I might do neither!* Well young men, remember this, the frequent, the ſerious thoughts of death will prevent many a ſinne, it will arm you againſt many temptations, it will ſecure you from many afflictions, it will keep you from doting on the World, it will make you do much in a little time, it will make Death eaſie when it comes, and it will make you look out betimes for a Kingdome that

2. Pet. 1. 13, 14. Eccl. 9. 10.

ſhakes not, for riches that corrupt not, and for glory that fadeth not away. Therefore do not, O do not put the day of death far from you. Take heed of crying *Cras, Cras,* to morrow, to morrow, ſaith *Luther,* for a man lives fourty years before he knows himſelf to be a fool, and by that time hee ſees his folly, his life is finiſhed, ſo men dye before they begin to live.

2 Direction.

Secondly, *If you would be good betimes, then take heed of leaning to your own underſtanding.*

This Counſel wiſe *Solomon* gives to his ſonne (or the young men in his time) *My Sonne, forget not my Law, but let thy heart keep my Commandements: Truſt in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own underſtanding.*

Prov. 3. 1, 5 Lean not, is a Metaphor from an old or ſick man leaning on his ſtaff, &c.

Youth is the age of folly, of vain-hopes, and over-grown confidence. Ah! how wiſe might many

many have been, had they not been too early wise in their own opinion.

Rehoboams young Counsellors proved the overthrow of his Kingdome. 'Tis brave for youth in all things to be discreet and sober minded. Three vertues they say are prime ornaments of youth, Modesty, Silence, and Obedience.

Ah! Young men; keep close in every action to this one principle, *viz.* in every action resolve to bee discreet and wise, rather than affectionate and singular.

I remember, that a young Gentleman of *Athens* being to answer for his life, hired an Orator to make his defence, and it pleased him well at his first reading, but when the young man by often reading it, that hee might recite it publickly by heart, begun to grow weary and displeased with it. The Orator bid him consider that the

Judges and the people were to hear it but once; and then it was likely that they at the firſt inſtant might bee as well pleaſed as hee.

Ah! Young men, your leaning upon your ſelves, or upon others, will in the end bee bitterneſſe and vexation of ſpirit; Young men are very apt to lean on their own Wit, Wiſdome, Arts, Parts, as old men are to lean on a ſtaff to ſupport them; (as the Hebrew Word ſignifies, that is rendred *Lean*, in that of *Prov.* 3. 5.) this hath been the bane of many a choice wit, the loſſe of many a brave Head, the ruine of many a ſubtile pate.

שִׁעֵן *Shagnan.*

Ajax thought it was onely for cowards and weaklings to lean upon the Lord for ſuccour, not for him, whence hee was foiled; lean not to great parts, lean not to natural or acquired accompliſhments, leſt you loſe them and your ſelves too. Leaning to natu-

natural, or moral excellencies, is the ready way to bee ſtript of all. *Babylon* that bore her ſelf bold upon her high Towers, thick walls, and twenty years proviſion laid in for a ſiege, was ſurprized by *Cyrus*.

'Twas ſaid of *Caſar*, that hee received not his wounds from the ſwords of enemies, but from the hands of friends, that is, from truſting in them.

Ah! How many young men have been wounded, yea, ſlain by truſting to their own underſtanding, their own abilities?

'Twas an excellent ſaying of *Auſtin* (*in te ſtas, & non ſtas*) hee that ſtands upon his own ſtrength, ſhall never ſtand. A Creature, if, like a ſingle drop, left to it ſelf, it ſpends and waſtes it ſelf preſently, but if like a drop in the fountain and Ocean of being, it hath abundance of ſecurity.

Ah! Young men, Young men, if you will needs be leaning, then lean upon precious Promiſes, 2 Pet. 1. 4. Pſal. 27. 1.

ſes, lean upon the Rock that is higher than your ſelves, lean upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as *John* did, who was the youngeſt of all the Diſciples, and the moſt beloved of all the Diſciples. *John* leaned much, and Chriſt loved him much. O lean upon Chriſts Wiſdome for Direction, lean upon his Power for Protection, lean upon (his Purſe) his Fulneſſe for Proviſion, lean upon his Eye for Approbation, lean upon his Righteouſneſſe for Juſtification, lean upon his blood for Remiſſion, lean upon his Merits for Salvation. As the young Vine without her Wall to ſupport her, will fall and ſink: So will you young men, without Chriſt puts under his everlaſting armes to ſupport you, and uphold you; therefore above all leanings, lean upon him; by leaning on him, you will ingage him; by leaning on him, you will gain more honour than you can give; by leaning on him, you may

John 21. 20.

Can. 8. 5.

may even command him, and make *him eternally* yours, &c.

3 Direction.

Thirdly, *If you would bee good betimes, if you would ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of your daies, then take heed of flatterers and flattery.* Ah! how many Young men might have been very good, who are now exceeding bad, by hearkening to flatterers, and affecting flattery? Flattery undid young *Rehoboam*, *Ahab*, *Herod*, *Nero*, *Alexander*, &c. Flatterers are ſoul-murderers, they are ſoul-undoers, they are like evil Chirurgions, that skin over the wound, but never heal it. 1 Kings 12 and ch. 22. Acts 12. 22, 23, 24.

Anaſtatius the Emperours motto was (*mellitum venenum blanda oratio*) ſmooth talk proves often ſweet Poyſon; Flattery is the very Spring and Mother of all Impiety, it blows the Trumpet, and draws poor ſouls into rebellion againſt God, as *Sheba* drew *Iſrael* to rebel againſt

David; it put our firſt Parents upon taſting the forbidden fruit; it put *Abſalon* upon dethroning of his Father; it put *Haman* upon plotting the ruine of the Jews, it put *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, upon rebelling againſt *Moſes*; it makes men call evil good, and good evil, darkneſſe light, and light darkneſſe, &c. it puts perſons upon neglecting the means of Grace, upon undervaluing the means of Grace, and upon contemning the means of Grace; it puts men upon abaſing God, ſlighting Chriſt, and vexing the Spirit, it unmans a man, it makes him call black white, and white black; it makes a man change Pearls, for Pebles, and Gold for Counters; it makes a man judge himſelf wiſe, when hee is fooliſh; knowing when he is ignorant; Holy, when hee is Prophane; Free, when hee is a Priſoner; Rich, when hee is Poor; high, when hee is low; full, when hee is empty; happy, when hee is miſerable.

The Flatterers told *Dionyſius*, that his ſpittle was as ſweet as hony. Rev. 3. 17, 18.

ſerable. Ah! Young men, young men, take heed of Flatterers, they are the very worſt of ſinners, they are left of God, blinded by Satan, hardened in ſin, and ripened for hell. God declares ſadly againſt them, and that in his Word, and in his Works; in his Word, as you may ſee by comparing theſe Scriptures together, *Deut.* 29. 18, 19, 20. *Pſal.* 78. 36. *Pſal.* 36. 1, 2. *Job* 17. 5. *Ezekiel* 12. 24. *Dan.* 11. 21, 32, 34. *Pſal.* 12. 2, 3. *They ſpeak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips, and with a double heart, do they ſpeak. The Lord ſhall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that ſpeaketh proud things*: And as God declares ſadly againſt them in his Word, ſo he hath declared terribly againſt them in his Works, as you may run and read in his judgements executed upon *Ahabs* flattering Prophets, and upon *Haman*, and upon *Daniels* (Princely) falſe Accuſers, &c. And why then will not you

Karah, ſignifies any cutting off, either by death, or baniſhment, &c.

you ſtop your ears againſt thoſe wretches, that the hand and heart of God is ſo much againſt?

A Preacher in *Conſtantines* time, preſumed to call the Emperour Saint to his face, but ſhee went away with a check, *Euſeb. de vit. Conſt. l.* 4.

Again, As God declares againſt them, ſo good men deteſt them and declare againſt them, as you may ſee by comparing theſe Scriptures together, *Pſal.* 5. 8, 9, 10. *Prov.* 2. 16. *Prov.* 7. 21. *Proverbs* 28. 23. *Job* 32. 21, 22. 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 5, 20. *Proverbs* 20. 19. *Meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips*? Why ſo? why, becauſe a man that flattereth his Neighbour, ſpreadeth a Net for his feet, *Proverbs* 29. 5. The Hebrew word (*Mahhalik* from *hhalak*) that is here rendred *Flatterer*, ſignifies a *Smooth-boots*, a ſoft butter-ſpoken man, becauſe flatterers uſe ſmooth, ſoft ſpeeches. Alſo the word ſignifies *to divide*, becauſe a flatterers tongue is divided from his heart. Flatterers have their Nets, and thoſe that give ear to them, will bee taken to their ruine. A lying tongue ha-

hateth thoſe that are afflicted by it, *and a flattering mouth worketh ruine, Proverbs 26. ult.* A flattering mouth ruines name, fame, eſtate, body, ſoul, life.

Valerian the *Roman* Emperour uſed to ſay (*Non acerba, ſed blanda*) not bitter, but flattering words doe all the miſchief.

When *Alexander* the Great was hit with an Arrow in the ſiege of an *Indian* City, which would not heal, he ſaid to his Paraſites, you ſay that I am *Jupiters* Son, but this VVound cries, that I am but a man.

Now ſhall good men deteſt them, and abhor them as they are the peſt of peſts, the plague of plagues, and will you own them, will you take pleaſure in them, to your ruine here and hereafter? the Lord forbid. O ſay to all Flatterers, as hee to his Idols, *Get you hence, for what have I more to doe with you?* Hoſ. 14. 8

Nay, once more conſider, that not

The Hebrew word הדה *Dahhah*, ſignifies ſuch a violent forcing of one, as hee cannot ſtand, it ſignifies to throw down, to drive on forwards till a man fall into deſtruction.

not only the good, but the bad, not only the beſt, but (ſome of) the worſt of men have manifeſted their deteſtation of Flatterers and Flattery.

Leo the Emperour uſed to ſay, (*occulti inimici peſſimi*) a cloſe enemy is farre worſe than an open. When a Court Paraſite praiſed *Sigiſmund* the Emperour above meaſure, the Emperour gave him a ſound box on the ear.

When *Ariſtobulus* the Hiſtorian preſented to *Alexander* the Great, a Book that hee had written of his glorious acts, wherein hee had flatteringly made him greater than he was; *Alexander* (after he had read the book) threw it into the River *Hydaſpes*, and ſaid to the Author, it were a good deed to throw thee after it.

When the Flatterers flattered *Antigonus*, hee cried out (*mentiris, mentiris in gutture, Hæ virtutes non latent in me*) thou lyeſt, thou lyeſt in thy throat, theſe vertues

tues that thou ſpeakeſt of; I have not in me, but I am like a Leopard, that have ten black ſpots to one white.

Auguſtus Cæſar, and *Tiberius Cæſar*, were deadly enemies to Flatterers, inſomuch that they would not be called Lords by their own children.

A good Symbole is attributed to *Trebonianus Gallus, viz.* (*Nemo amicus idem & adulator*) no Flatterer can be a true friend.

Ariſtippus (the Philoſopher) ſeeing *Diogenes* waſhing of herbs for his Dinner, ſaid, if *Diogenes* knew how to make uſe of Kings, hee need not live upon raw herbs as hee doth; to which *Diogenes* replied, that if *Ariſtippus* could content himſelf with Herbs, hee need not to turn Spaniel, or to flatter King *Dionyſius* for a meals meat.

Ah! Young men, young men, ſhall God, ſhall good men, ſhall bad men deteſt and declare againſt Flatterers, and Flattery, and will

not

not you turn a deaf ear upon them, yea fly from them, as from a Serpent, and ſhun them as you would ſhun Hell it ſelf? if you do not, the very Heathens but now cited, will riſe in judgement againſt you.

Flatterers are the very worſt of ſinners. The Flatterers told *Caſar*, that his freckles in his face, were like the Starres in the Firmament; they bought and ſold *Aurelius* the Emperour at pleaſure. And *Auguſtus* complained when *Varrus* was dead, that hee had none now left that would deal plainly and faithfully with him.

So men may gain by Flattery, they will bee like *Harpalus*, who ſaid (*Quod Regi placet, mihi placet*) that which pleaſeth the King, pleaſeth mee, when *Aſtyages* ſet his own Son before him to feed upon him:

O but let every Young man ſay, (into whoſe hands this Treatiſe ſhall fall) *Quod Deo pla-*

placet, mihi placet) that which pleaſeth God, pleaſeth me.

I have been the longer upon this, out of love to Young mens ſouls, who are ſo apt to bee inſnared in the Flatterers Net; if ever you would bee good in good earneſt, you muſt abhor Flatterers as the firſt-born of the Devil, and as ſuch as are moſt pernitious to mens happineſſe both here and hereafter.

Whilſt an Aſſe is ſtroaked under the belly, you may lay on his back what burden you pleaſe.

It is reported of one *Oramazes*, that hee had an enchanted Egge, in which (as hee boaſted himſelf) hee had incloſed all the happineſs of the VVorld, but being broken, nothing was found in it but wind. *Flatterers are the greateſt Cheaters, the greateſt Deceivers in the world.*

They ſay of the *Crocodile*, that when hee hath killed a man, hee will weep over him, as if he were ſorry, and did repent for what hee had done; the Application is eaſie.

4 Direction.

Fourthly, *If you would bee good betimes, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your daies, then take heed of engaged affections to the things of the world.*

The Young man in the Gospel took many a step towards Heaven; *All these things have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?* Christ makes a very fair offer to him in the next words. *Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven, and come and follow mee;* thou shalt have Heaven for Earth, a Sea for a drop, a Treasure for a mite, a Crown for a crum. I but the Young mans affections were strongly engaged to the things of the world; and therefore hee turnes his back upon Christ, and goes away sorrowful, because hee had great possessions. O the madnesse, the folly of this young man, who to enjoy a little temporal

Mat. 19. 16--24.

Multi amando res noxias sunt miseri, habendo miseriores. August. in Psal. 26.

temporal felicity, hath bid an everlasting farewel to Christ and Glory, in that *Gen.*13.2. it is said, that *Abraham* was very rich in Cattel, in Silver, and in Gold; the Hebrew word (*Cabedh*) that is here rendered *Rich*, signifies heavy, it signifies a burthen, to shew us, that riches are a heavy burthen, and an hinderance many times to Heaven and happinesse; and this young man in the Gospel found it so to his eternal undoing. Though the load-stone cannot draw the Iron when the Diamond is in presence, yet earthly possessions did draw this young mans soul away, when Christ the Pearl of price was present; the World is a silken net, and this young man found it so; the World is like Golden Fetters, and this young man found it so; the World is like sweet poison, and this young man found it so; for hee had drunk so large a draught of it, that there was no room in his soul for Christ or Heaven, for

They are *dulce venenum*, a sweet poison. *Bern.*

Grace, or Glory. Some ſay, that when the Serpent *Scytale* cannot overtake the flying Paſſenger, ſhee doth with her beautiful colours ſo aſtoniſh and amaze them, that they have no power to paſſe away, till ſhe have ſtung them; ſuch a Serpent the World proved to the young man in the Goſpel, it did ſo affect him and take him, ſo amaze him, and amuze him, that he could not ſtir till it ſtung him to death.

When the Moon is fulleſt, it is fartheſt from the Sun; ſo the more men have of the World, the further (commonly) they are from God; and this the young man in the Goſpel made good.

If mony were thrown to the dogs, they would not ſo much as ſmell at it, the greater is their folly and madneſs, that will go to hell gates for it

Many have ventured life and limb, and many a better thing, to gain the things of this world, and yet after all, they have got nothing at all. *Achans* golden wedge, proved a wedge to cleave him, and his garment, a garment to ſhrowd him.

The whole world is circular, the

the heart of a man is triangular, and we know a circle can not fill a triangle; yea, if it be not filled with the three perſons in Trinity, it will bee filled with the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil. The World may be reſembled to the fruit that undid us all, which was fair to the ſight, ſmooth in handling, ſweet in taſte, but deadly in effect and operation.

Ah! Young men, Young men, have none of you found it ſo?

The world in all its bravery is no better than the Cities which *Solomon* gave to *Hiram*, which hee called *Cabul*, that is to ſay, diſpleaſing—or dirty; the world will afford nothing but trivial Flowers, ſurrounded with many Bryers: O the vanity! the uncertainty, the imperfection of all things below! if a man ſhould weigh his pay, and his pains together, his miſeries, and his pleaſures together, his joyes, and

1 King. 9. 13.

his sorrows together, his mercies, and his crosses together, his good daies, and his bad daies together, will hee not conclude vanity of vanity, and all is vanity?

In my other Treatises, you may read more of the vanity, insufficiency, impotency, mutability, uncertainty, and inconstancy of the world, and to them I refer you.

It was a wise and Christian Speech of *Charles* the fifth, to the Duke of *Venice*, who when hee had shewed him the glory of his Princely Palace, and earthly Paradise, instead of admiring it, or him for it, onely returned him this grave and serious *memento*, (*Hac sunt quæ faciunt invitos mori*) these are the things which make us unwilling to die; it was a good saying of one to a great Lord (upon his shewing him his stately House, and pleasant Gardens;) Sir, you had need make sure of Heaven, or else when you dye, you will bee a very great loser.

Ah! Young men, Young men, 'tis onely Heaven that is above all winds, storms, and tempests, nor hath God cast man

man out of Paradiſe for him to think to finde out another Paradiſe in this world; the main reaſon, why many young men dote upon the world, is, becauſe they are not acquainted with a greater glory: Men ate Acorns, till they were acquainted with the uſe of Wheat. The Woman had the Moon under her feet, when ſhe was cloathed with the Sun, and had a Crown of twelve ſtars upon her head. Rev. 12. 1

Ah! Young men; were you but cloathed with the Sun of Righteouſneſſe, and had you a Crown ſet upon your heads, by the hand of Faith, you would have all the things of this World, which are as low, beſpotted, and mutable, as the Moon, under your feet; well young men, as ever you would be good betimes ſit looſe from the things of this world, be no longer worſhipers of this golden Calf, and never let the World, that ſhould bee but your ſervant, become your Lord; O Heb. 11. 24,25,26, 27,35. ch. 10. 34

let not the Devil and the world have more service for an ounce of gold, than Christ shall have for the Kingdome of Heaven!

Ah young men! the World and you must part, or Christ and you will never meet; *you cannot serve God and Mammon.* The two Poles shall sooner meet, than the love of Christ, and the love of the World.

Mat. 6. 14

5 Direction.

Fifthly, *If you would bee good betimes, if you would know, seek, and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your youth, then take heed betimes of carnal reason, take heed of consulting with flesh and blood.*

Gal. 1. 15, 16.

Many a hopeful young man hath been undone temporally, and undone eternally, by hearkening to those evil counsellors,

Cicero, a Heathen, could say, that man would not bee so wicked, and do so wickedly, were it not for his reason.

Carnal reason is an enemy, yea, an utter enemy, nay, it is not only an utter enemy, but it is enmity, yea, enmities, *Rom.* 8. 7. An enemy may bee reconciled, but enmity

enmity can never bee reconciled. Carnal Reaſon is not onely averſe, but it is utterly averſe to all Goodneſſe, it builds ſtrong holds and ſyllogiſms againſt the moſt glorious Goſpel-truths, and accounts the precious things of Chriſt as a ſtrange thing; carnal Reaſon will make God and Goſpel do homage to it; when carnal Reaſon is in the Throne, Chriſt and his Truths muſt all bow, or bee judged before its bar.

Ah! Young men, young men, as ever you would bee good betimes, ſtop your ears againſt all carnal reaſonings within you; carnal Reaſon judges the choiceſt things of the Goſpel to bee meer fooliſhneſſe, it is purblinde, and cannot ſee how to make a right judgement of Chriſt, his Word, his waies, and yet will controul all. 1 Cor. 1. 23.

If you are reſolved to bee ſtill ſcholars to this Maſter, then you muſt reſolve to be unhappy here,

and miſerable hereafter. But

It is ſafer and better for you to imitate thoſe young men, who in the morning of their daies have graciouſly, wiſely, and reſolutely withſtood thoſe evil Counſellors; Carnal Reaſon, Fleſh, and Blood, *Joſeph* and *Moſes*, *Daniel*, *Shadrach*, *Meſhach*, and *Abednego*, all theſe in the Prime-roſe of their youth were good, at turning the deaf ear to carnal counſel, and carnal Counſellors.

Gen. 39. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, &c. Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26. Dan. 1.

Caſſianus reports of a young man that had given himſelf up to a Chriſtian life, and his Parents miſliking that way, they wrote letters to him to perſwade him from it; and when he knew there were letters come from them, he would not open them, but threw them into the fire; this example is worth a following.

Another famous example you have in the ſtory of King *Edward* the ſixth, when *Cranmar* and *Ridley* came to him, and were very earneſt to have him give way

to

to his Sister the Lady *Mary* to have Masse; hee stood out and pleaded the case with them, that it was a sin against God, and provoking to the eyes of his glory, &c. but they still continued to use many carnal Arguments to perswade the King (who was but a childe about fifteen years of age) but hee withstood them a great while, but at length, when hee saw hee could not prevail with all his pleading against those grave men, but that they still continued their suit, hee burst out into bitter weeping, and sobbing, desiring them to desist; the motioners seeing his zeal and constancy, wept as fast as he, and being overcome, they went away, and told one, that the King had more divinity in his little finger, than they had in all their bodies.

Ah! young men, it will be your safety, and your glory, to write after this Princely Copy, when you are surrounded with carnal reason, and carnal counsellors, &c.

Sixthly,

6 Direction.

Sixthly, and Lastly, *If you would be good betimes, then take heed of comparing your selves with those that are worse than your selves.*

Joh. 9 39, 40,

Young men are very apt to compare themselves with those that are worse than themselves, and this proves a snare unto them, yea oftentimes their bane, their ruine; As it did the young Pharisee in the Gospel, who pleaded his Negative Righteousnes, hee was not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, and stood on his comparative goodnesse, nor as this Publican, hee stands not only upon his comparisons, but upon his disparisons, being blinde at home, and too quick sighted abroad; hee contemneth and condemneth the poor Publican, who was better than himself, makeing good that saying of *Seneca*, the nature of man, saith hee, is very apt (*utimur perspicillis magis quam speculis*) to use Spectacles to behold other mens faults, rather than

Luke 18. 11,12,13, 14

Thales, one of the seven Sages, being asked what was the easiest thing in the world to doe, answered, to know other mens faults, and none of our own.

than Looking-glaſſes to behold our own; ſuch Phariſees doe juſtly incur the cenſure which that ſowre Philoſopher paſt upon Grammarians, that they were better acquainted with the evil of *Ulyſſes*, than with their own.

Diogenes apud Laertium. l. 6

Ah! Young man, young man, you know, he that drinks poyſon, though hee drinks not ſo much as another; and hee that commits treaſon, though not ſo great, ſo high treaſon as another, ſhall yet as certainly bee poyſoned, and hanged, as hee that hath drunk a greater quantity of poiſon, and committed higher acts of treaſon.

Mat. 11. 22,23,24, 25 As in Heaven, one is more glorious than another, ſo in Hel, one ſhall bee more miſerable than another. *Aug.*

Sirs, doe not delude and befool your own ſouls, if you are not as wicked as others, you ſhall not bee as much tormented as others, but yet you ſhall bee as certainly damned as others, you ſhall as certainly to Hell as others, you ſhall as ſure bee ſhut out for ever from God, Chriſt, Saints, Angels, and all the Treaſures, plea-

pleasures, and glories of Heaven, as others, except it be prevented, by timely repentance on your side, and pardoning mercy on Gods. Wilt thou count it madnesse, O young man! in him that is sick, to reason thus? I am not so sick, as such and such, and therefore I will not send to the Physician; And in the wounded man to say, I am not so desperately wounded as such and such, and therefore I will not send to the Chirurgion; and in the traitor to say, I am not guilty of so many foul and hainous treasons as such and such, and therefore I will not look after a pardon; and in the necessitous man to say, I am not so hard put to it as such and such, and therefore I will not welcome a hand of charity? and wilt thou not count it the greatest madnesse in the World for thee to put off thy repentance, and thy returning to the Lord in the spring and morning of thy youth, because that thou art not as sinful, as

as wicked as such and such, if to have a softer bed, a milder punishment in Hell, than others, will satisfie thee, then go on; but if thou art afraid of the worm that never dies, and of the fire that never goes out; being like that stone in *Arcadia*, which being once kindled, could not bee quenched; O then begin to be good betimes! O seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your daies!

To think often of Hell, is the way to bee preserved from falling into Hell. Ah! Young men, young men, that you would often consider of the bitternesse of the damneds torments, and of the pittilesnes of their torments, and of the diversity of their torments, and of the easelesnes of their torments, and of the remedilesnes of their torments. (*Momentaneum est quod delectat, Æternum quod cruciat.*) The Sinners delight here is momentany, that which torments hereafter is perpetual; when a Sinner

Chrysost. Hom. 44. in Mat.

Sinner is in Hell, doſt thou think, O Young man! that another Chriſt ſhall bee found to dye for him, or that the ſame Chriſt will bee crucified again for him, or that another Goſpel ſhould be preached to him? Surely no.

Ah! Why then wilt thou not betimes return and ſeek out after the things that belong to thy everlaſting peace? I have read of Pope *Clement* the fifth, that when a young Nephew of his died, hee ſent his Chaplain to a Necromancer, to know of him how it fared with him in the other World, the Conjurer ſhewed him to the Chaplain, lying in a fiery bed in Hell, which when the Pope underſtood, he never joyed more, &c.

Jac. Rev. Hiſt. Pont. Rom. 199.

Ah! Young man, that theſe occaſional hints of Hell, may bee a means to preſerve thee from lying in thoſe everlaſting flames.

Bellarmine tells us of a certain Advocate of the Court of *Rome*, that

that being at the point of death, was ſtirred up by them that ſtood by, to repent and call upon God for mercy, hee with a conſtant countenance, and without ſign of fear, turned his ſpeech to God, and ſaid, Lord, I have a deſire to ſpeak unto thee, not for my ſelf, but for my Wife and Children, for I am haſtening to Hell, neither is there any thing that thou ſhouldeſt doe for me; and this hee ſpake, ſaith *Bellarmine* (who was preſent, and heard it) as if hee had ſpoken of a journey to ſome Village or Town, and was no more affrighted. *Bellar. de arte moriendi, l. 2. c. 10.*

Sir *Francis Bacon* alſo in his Hiſtory of *Henry* the ſeventh, relates, how it was a common by-word of the Lord *Cordes*, that hee would be content to lye ſeven years in hell ſo hee might win *Calice* from the *Engliſh*; but if thou O young man art given up to ſuch deſperate Atheiſm, and carnal Apprehenſions of Hell, I am afraid God will confute thee one day by fire and brimſtone; but I would willingly hope

hope better things of all those young persons, into whose hands this Treatise shall fall; and thus you see what things must bee declined and avoided; if ever you would bee good betimes, if ever you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your daies.

CHAP. VII.

But in the second place, *as those things must be declined, so other things must carefully and diligently be practised, if ever you would be good betimes.* I shall instance only in those that are most considerable and weighty; As.

First, *If ever you would bee good betimes, &c: then you must labour to bee acquainted with four things betimes.*

1 Duty.

First, *You must labour to acquaint your selves with the Scripture betimes*, you must study the Word betimes; *David* studied the Word in

in the morning of his daies, in the primrose of his Youth, and this made him wiser than his enemies, yea, than his teachers; this made him as much excel the antients, as the Sun excels the Moon, or as the Moon excels the twinckling Stars. *Timothy* was good betimes, and no wonder, for in the prim-rose of his daies, hee was acquainted with the Scripture, hee was inured to the VVord from his child-hood, yea, from his infancy, as the VVord properly signifies; so in that 119. *Psalm*, the 9. vers. *Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed according to thy Word*; there is no way to a holy heart, and a clean life, but by acquainting of your selves with the VVord betimes; one hath long since observed; that God hath bowed down the Scriptures to the capacity even of babes and sucklings, that all excuse may bee taken away, and that Young men may bee encouraged to study the

Psal. 119. 97,98,99, 100,101, 102,103.

2 Tim. 3. 15. ἀπὸ Βρέφος. from a suckling.

Aug.

Scripture betimes. Ah! Young men, no Histories are comparable to the Histories of the Scriptures. 1. For Antiquity. 2. Rarity. 3. Variety. 4. Brevity. 5. Perspicuity. 6. Harmony. 7. Verity, All other Books cannot equal Gods, either in age, or authority, in dignity or excellency, in sufficiency, or glory.

Adoro Plenitudinem Scripturarum. Tertullian.

Moses is found more antient and more honourable, than all those, whom the *Grecians* make most antient and honourable, as *Homer*, *Hesiod*, and *Jupiter* himself, whom the *Greeks* have seated in the top of their Divinity.

The whole Scripture is but one entire Love-letter, dispatcht from the Lord Christ to his beloved Spouse, and who then but would still bee a reading in this Love-letter? Like *Cacilia* a *Roman* Maiden of Noble Parentage, who carried alwaies about her the New Testament, that shee might

Gregory calls the Scripture (*Cor & animam Dei*) the heart and soul of God.

might ſtill bee a reading in Chriſts Love-letter, and behold the ſweet workings of his love, and heart, towards his dear and precious ones.

Luther found ſo much ſweetneſs in the word, in Chriſts Love-letter, that made him ſay, he would not live in Paradiſe if hee might, without the VVord (*at cum verbo etiam in inferno facile eſt vivere*) but with the VVord hee could live in Hell it ſelf.

The VVord is like the ſtone *Garumantides*, that hath drops of Gold in it ſelf, enriching of the beleeving ſoul. This the Martyrs found, which made them willing to give a load of hay for a few leaves of the Bible in *Engliſh*.

Auguſtine profeſſeth, that the ſacred Scriptures were his whole delight.

And *Hierom* tells (us) of one *Nepotianum*, who by long and aſſiduous meditation on the holy Scriptures, had made his breaſt the Library of Jeſus Chriſt.

Hier. Epiſtola ad Heliod. in Epitaphium Nepotiani.

And *Rabbi Chiia* in the *Jeruſalem Talmud*, ſaith, that in his account, all the world is not of equal value with one word out of the Law. That which a Papiſt reports lyingly of their Sacrament of the Maſſe, *viz.* that there are as many myſteries in it, as there bee drops in the Sea, duſt on the Earth, Angels in Heaven, Stars in the Sky, Atomes in the Sun-beams, or ſands on the Sea-ſhore, &c. may bee truly aſſerted of the holy Scriptures.

Oh the myſteries, the excellencies, the glories, that are in the word! Ah, no book to this book, none ſo uſeful, none ſo needful, none ſo delightful, none ſo neceſſary to make you happy, and to keep you happy as this. It is ſaid of *Cæſar* (*major fuit cura Cæſari libellorum, quam purpuræ*) that hee had greater care of his books, than of his Royal Robes, for ſwimming thorow the waters to eſcape his enemies, hee carried his books in his hand above the

waters

waters, but loſt his Robe; now what are *Caſars* books to Gods books.

Ah! Young men, young men, the Word of the Lord is a light to guide you; a Counſellor, to councel you; a comforter, to comfort you; a ſtaff, to ſupport you; a ſword, to defend you; and a Phyſician, to cure you; the word is a Mine, to enrich you; a Robe, to cloath you; and a Crown, to crown you, it is Bread, to ſtrengthen you; and Wine, to cheer you; and a Hony-comb, to feaſt you; and Muſick, to delight you; and a Paradiſe to entertain you. Pſal. 119.

Oh! Therefore before all, and above all, ſearch the Scripture, ſtudy the Scripture, dwell on the Scripture, delight in the Scripture, treaſure up the Scripture, no Wiſdome, to Scripture Wiſdome; no Knowledge, to Scripture Knowledge; no Experience, to Scripture Experience; no Comforts, to Scripture Comforts; no

The Jewiſh Rabbins were wont to ſay, that upon every letter of the Law, there hangs mountains of profitable matter

Delights, to Scripture Delights; no Convictions, to Scripture Convictions; nor no Conversion, to Scripture Conversion.

Tolle & lege.

Augustin hearing a voice from Heaven, that bad him take and read, whereupon turning open the New Testament, hee fell upon that place, *Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkennesse, not in chambering and wantonnesse, not in strife and envying. But put yee on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.* This Scripture so sunk into his heart, as that it proved the means of his conversion, as himself reports; this *Augustin* as hee was once preaching, his memory failing of him, contrary to his purpose, hee fell upon reproving the *Manicheans*, and by a Scripture, or two, not before thought of; to confute their Heresies, hee converted *Firmus* a *Manichean*, as hee after acknowledged to *Augustin*, blessing God for that Sermon.

Rom. 13. 13, 14

Lib. 8 confes. cap. 11

Possidon de vita, Augustin.

It

It is reported of one *Adrianus*, who seeing the Martyrs suffer such grievous things in the Cause of God, hee asked, what was that which caused them to suffer such things? and one of them named that Text; *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*; And this Text was set home, with such a power upon him, as that it converted him, and made him to profess Religion, and not only to profess it, but to dye a Martyr for it. 1 Cor. 2. 9

Cyprian was converted by reading the Prophecy of *Jonah*. *Junius* was converted, by reading the first Chapter of *John* the Evangelist.

I have read of a scandalous Minister that was struck at the heart, and converted in reading that Scripture, *Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thy self, &c?* Rom. 2. 21

Wee read that *Paphnutius* converted *Thais* and *Ephron*, two famous

mous ſtrumpets, from uncleanneſs, only with this Scripture-Argument, *That God ſeeth all things in the dark, when the Doors are faſt, the Windows ſhut, the Curtains drawn.*

Heb. 4. 13

I have read of a poor man, who perſwaded a young ſcholar to leave reading of *Poetry*, &c. and fall upon reading of the Scripture, which accordingly he did; and it pleaſed the Lord, before hee had read out *Geneſis*, to change his heart, and to turn him to the Lord in the Prim-roſe of his daies, hee being then but twenty years of age.

I have read of a young Lady, called *Potamia*, of a very illuſtrious Family, who endured very much in her Martyrdome, by the extream cruelty of *Baſilides* her Executioner: yet after her death, hee bethinking himſelf of the holy words, and Scripture-expreſſions that were uttered by her, during her cruel Torments, became a Chriſtian, and within few

Origen was her School-maſter.

few daies after, was himſelf likewiſe Crowned with Martyrdome.

James Andreas, a godly Miniſter, hearing of a Jew, that for Theft was hanged by the heels, with his head downward, having not ſeen that kinde of puniſhment, hee went to the place where hee was hanging between two Doggs that were alwaies ſnatching at him to eat his fleſh, the poor wretch repeated in Hebrew ſome verſes of the *Pſalmes*, wherein hee cried to God for mercy, whereupon *Andreas* went near to him, and inſtructed him in the Principles of Chriſtian Religion, about Chriſt the *Meſſiah*, &c. Exhorting him to beleeve in him, and it pleaſed God ſo to bleſſe his Scripture Exhortations to him, that the Doggs gave over tearing of his fleſh, and the poor Jew deſired him to procure, that hee might bee taken down and baptized, and hung by the neck for the quicker diſpatch

A Miracle of mercy.

patch, which was done accordingly.

I might produce other inſtances, but let theſe ſuffice to provoke all young perſons to a ſpeedy, ſerious, diligent, and conſtant ſtudy of the Scripture. Ah Sirs! you doe not know how ſoon your blinde mindes may bee enlightned, your hard hearts ſoftned, your proud ſpirits humbled, your ſinful natures changed, your defiled Conſciences purged, your diſtempered affections regulated, and your poor Souls ſaved, by ſearching into the Scriptures; by reading the Scripture, and by pondering upon the Scripture; you ſhould lay up the Manna of Gods Word in your hearts, as *Moſes* laid up the Manna in the golden pot. And as *Tamar* did with the ſtaff and ſignet that ſhee received from *Judah*, ſhee laid them up till ſhee came to ſave her life, and did ſave her life by it, as you may ſee in holy ſtory.

Much in the word is wrap'd up in a little.

It is more to be admired, than to have *Homers* Illiads comprized in a Nut ſhell.

Heb. 9. 4

Gen. 38. 18-36

The

The laying up of the VVord now, may be the saving of your souls another day.

I have read of little Bees, that when they goe out in stormy weather, they will carry a little of their comb, or gravel with them, that they may be ballanced, and not carried away with the wind.

Ah! Young men, young men, you had need to have your thoughts and hearts ballanced with the precious VVord, that you may not bee carried away with every wind of doctrine, as many have been in these daies, to their destruction and confusion.

Narcissus a beautiful Youth, though hee would not love them that loved him, yet afterwards fell in love with his own shadow: Ah! how many Young men in these daies, who were once lovely and hopeful, are now fallen in love with their own and others shadows, with high, empty, aiery notions, and with strange monstrous speculations to their own damnation? 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12.

Ho-

Holy *Melanchthon*, being newly converted, thought it impoſſible for his Hearers to withſtand the evidence of the Goſpel; but ſoon after, hee complained that old *Adam* was too hard for young *Melanchthon*.

Ah! Young men, young men, if you doe not in good earneſt give up your ſelves to the reading to the ſtudying, to the pondering, to the beleeving, to the affecting, to the applying, and to the living up to the Scripture, Satan will bee too hard for you, the World will bee too hard for you, your Luſts will bee too hard for you, Temptations will bee too hard for you, and Deceivers will bee too hard for you, and in the end you will bee miſerable; and thus much for the firſt thing, &c.

2 Duty.

Secondly, *If you would bee good betimes, then you muſt acquaint your*

your ſelves with your ſelves betimes.

If you would bee gracious in the ſpring and morning of your daies, then you muſt ſee betimes how bad you are, how vile, how ſinful, how wretched you are; no man beginnes to bee good, till hee ſees himſelf to be bad; the young Prodigal never beganne to mend, hee never thought of returning to his Father, till hee came to himſelf, till hee beganne to return into his own ſoul, and ſaw himſelf in an undone condition. Luke 15. 12 -- 22

Ah! Young men, Young men, you muſt ſee your ſelves *To bee children of Wrath, to bee Enemies, to bee Strangers, to boe afarre off from God, from Chriſt, from the Covenant, from Heaven, to bee Sins ſervants, and Satans bond-ſlaves*; the ready way to bee found, is to ſee your ſelves loſt; the firſt ſtep to mercy, is to ſee your miſery; the firſt ſtep towards Heaven, is to ſee your ſelves neer to Hell; you won't look after Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3, 12, 13 Rom. 6. 16 Joh. 8. 44 2 Tim. 2. 26

Auſtin ſaith, hee would willingly go thorow Hell to Chriſt, ſo will all that ſee their need of Chriſt.

ter the Phyſician of ſouls, you won't prize the Phyſician of ſouls, you won't deſire the Phyſician of ſouls, you won't match with the Phyſician of ſouls, you won't fall in love, in league with the Phyſician of ſouls, you won't reſign up your ſelves to the Phyſician of ſouls, till you come to ſee your VVounds, till you come to feel your Diſeaſes, till you ſee the Tokens, the Plague-ſores of Divine wrath and diſpleaſure upon you; as the whole doe not need the Phyſician, ſo they doe not deſire, they doe not care for the Phyſician.

Zanche writ a Tractat, *Quod nihil ſcitur.*

Ah! Young men, as you would bee good betimes, begin to acquaint your ſelves with your ſinful ſelves betimes, beginne to acquaint your ſelves betimes with your Natural and undone condition.

There is a three-fold ſelf.

1 There is a Natural ſelf, as a mans parts, wit, reaſon, will, affections,

Affections, and Inclinations, &c.

2 A Religious ſelf, and ſo a mans duties, graces, obedience, righteouſneſſe, holineſſe, are called ones ſelf.

3 There is a ſinful ſelf, and ſo a mans corruptions, luſts, ſinful nature and diſpoſitions are called ones ſelf; now if ever you would bee good betimes, you muſt acquaint your ſelves with your ſinful ſelves betimes.

Luther ſaid, that if a man could perfectly ſee his owne faults, the ſight therof would bee a very hell unto him.

Demonicus being asked at what time hee beganne to bee a Philoſopher: Anſwered, when I began to know my ſelf. So a man never beginnes to bee a Chriſtian, till hee begins to know himſelf. And indeed, for a man to know himſelf, to acquaint himſelf with himſelf, is one of the hardeſt works in all the VVorld. For as the Eye can ſee all things but it ſelf, ſo moſt can diſcerne all faults but their owne. *Henry* the Fourth Emperor of *Germany*, his uſual ſpeech was (*Multi multa ſciunt*

sciunt, se autem nemo) many know much, but few know themselves.

The very Heathens did admire that saying as an Oracle (*nosce teipsum*) know and bee acquainted with thy owne self. The main exhortation of *Chilo*, one of the seven Sages, was, know thy self; And *Plato* recordeth, that this saying of *Chilo*, know thy self, was written in Letters of Gold, upon the Portal of *Apolloes* Temple.

Juvenal saith, that this saying, Know thy self, came from Heaven. *Macrobius* saith, that the Oracle of *Apollo* being demanded what course should bee taken for attaining to felicity? answered, Only teach a man to know himself.

Thus you see, that both Divinity and Philosophy doth agree in this, that the best and surest way to true felicity, is, to know our selves, to acquaint our selves with our selves.

This

This Duty the Apoſtle charges upon the *Epheſians*, *Remember that you, being in times paſt Gentiles in the fleſh, that at that time you were without Chriſt, aliens from the Common-wealth of* Iſrael, *and ſtrangers from the Covenant of Promiſe, having no hope, and without God in the world.*

Here are five withouts, *without Chriſt, without the Church, without the Promiſe, without Hope, and without God in the world.*

Man in his Natural ſtate is afar off, (hee is without) three manner of waies.

1 In point of opinion and apprehenſion.

2 In point of fellowſhip and communion.

3 In point of grace and converſion.

As you would be good betimes, dwell much upon your corrupt nature betimes; Ah! ſuch is the corruption of our nature, that propound any divine good to it, it is entertained as fire by water, or

Eph. 2. 11, 12

Of dull and inſenſible men, one long ſince thus complained (*patientius ferre Chriſti jacturam, quam ſuam*) that they did more calmly paſs by the injuries done to Chriſt, than thoſe that were done unto themſelves O the plague of unſenſibleneſs!

wet Wood, with hiſſing; propound any evil, then it is like fire to ſtraw, it is like the fooliſh Satyre, that made haſte to kiſs the fire; it is like that unctuous matter, which the Naturaliſts ſay, ſucks and ſnatches the fire to it, with which it is conſumed; till you come to bee ſenſible of this, you will never begin to bee good, you will never looke to have your hearts changed, and your ſouls ſaved.

The *Æthiopians* paint Angels black, and Devils white, in favour of their owne complexion, and they ſay, that if the brute Creatures could draw a picture of the Divine Nature, they would make their ſhape the Copy, and thus they flatter and delude themſelves; take heed Young men, take heed, that you doe not put the like cheats upon your owne ſouls, take heed that you bee not like thoſe Limners, who ſo as they can make a mans Picture gay and gaudy, care not to draw it

ſo

so as to resemble him. It is safest and best O Young man! to know the worst of thy self, and to know thy self, as thou art in thy self, and not as thy own flattering heart, or as other flatterers may represent thee to thy self.

3 Duty.

Thirdly, If you would bee good betimes, then *you must acquaint your selves with Jesus Christ betimes.*

You must know him betimes; A man never begins to bee good, till hee begins to know him that is the fountain of all goodness; *This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Joh. 17. 3

The knowledge of Christ, is the beginning of eternal life, it is the way to eternal life, it is a taste of eternal life, it is a sure pledge and pawn to the soul of eternal life.

The *Spaniards* say of *Aquinas*, that hee that knowes not him, knowes not any thing, but hee

that knows him knows all things: hee that knows Jeſus Chriſt, not notionally only, but practically, not apprehenſively only, but affectively, hee knows all things that may make him happy; but he that knows not Jeſus Chriſt, knows nothing that will ſtand him in ſtead, when hee ſhall lye upon a dying bed, and ſtand before a Judgment Seat.

Juſtin Martyr relates, that when in his diſcourſe with *Tryphon*, hee mentioned the knowledge of Chriſt, as conducing to our happineſſe and perfection, *Tryphons* friends laugh'd at it, but I hope better things of all thoſe, into whoſe hands this treatiſe ſhall fall.

Sirs, the Sun is not more neceſſary to the World; the Eye to the Body, the Pilate to the Ship, the General to the Army, &c. than the knowledge of Chriſt betimes, is neceſſary for all thoſe that would bee good betimes.

Dear hearts, as ever you would bee good betimes, *you muſt labour*

bour, even as for life, *to know and bee thorowly acquainted with these six things*, concerning Jesus Christ, betimes.

First, If you would bee good betimes, then *you must know betimes, that there is every thing in Christ, that may encourage you to seek him, and serve him, to love him, and obey him, to beleeve on him, and to marry with him.*

Nec Christus, nec cœlum, patitur hyperbolen.

If you look upon his names, his natures, his offices, his graces, his dignities, his excellencies, his royalties, his glories, his fulnesses, they all speak out as much.

Are you poor? why Christ hath tried gold to enrich you; are you naked? Christ hath white raiment to cloathe you; are you spiritually blinde? Christ hath eye-salve to enlighten you; are you in straights? hee hath wisdome to Counsel you; are you unrighteous? hee will bee righteousnes to you; are you unholy? hee will bee holines and sanctification to you; are you hungry?

Rev. 3. 18

1 Cor. 1. 30

Joh. 6. 48
Iſa. 55. 1
Mat. 11. 28
Mat. 9. 12

gry? hee is bread to feed you; are you thirſty? he is Wine and Milk to ſatisfie you; are you weary? hee is a Bed, a Seat, to reſt you; are you ſick? why hee is a Phyſician to cure you, &c. (*Omne bonum in ſummo bono*) all good is in the chiefeſt good.

Chriſt is the *Bonum in quo omnia bona.*

The Creatures have their particular goodneſs; health hath its particular goodneſs, and wealth hath its particular goodneſs, and learning hath its, and the favour of the Creature hath its, &c. but now Jeſus Chriſt hee is an univerſal good, all the petty excellencies that are ſcattered abroad in the Creatures, are united to Chriſt; yea all the whole volume of perfections, which is ſpread through Heaven and Earth, is epitomized in him, *Ipſe unus erit tibi omnia, qui in ipſo uno bono, bona ſunt omnia. Aug.* One Chriſt will bee to thee inſtead of all things elſe, becauſe in him are all good things to bee found. *Abrahams* ſervant brought forth Jewels

els of Silver, and Jewels of Gold, to win *Rebeccha's* heart to *Iſaac*; ſo ſhould you, O young men! bee often in preſenting to your owne view, all thoſe amiable and excellent things that bee in Chriſt, to win your hearts over to Chriſt betimes.

Gen. 24. 53

Secondly, If you would bee good betimes, *Then you muſt know betimes, that Jeſus Chriſt is mighty to ſave.*

Heb. 7. 25 εἰς τὸ παντελὲς. Perpetually. Conſtantly.

Hee is able to ſave to the uttermoſt, all them that come unto him, that beleeve in him, and that caſt themſelves upon him. The Lord hath laid help upon one that is mighty, Chriſt ſaves perfectly, thorowly, perpetually, them that come unto him.

Mat. 9. 28 Iſa. 63. 1 Mighty to ſave.

The three Tongues that were written upon the Croſs, in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, to witneſſe Chriſt to bee the King of the *Jewes*, doe each of them in their ſeveral Ideoms avouch this Axiome, that Chriſt is an all-ſufficient Saviour; and a threefold

fold cord is not eaſily broken. They ſay it is true of the Oyl at *Rhemes*, that though it bee continually ſpent in the auguration of their Kings of *France*, yet it never waſteth; Chriſt is that pot of Mannah, that cruſe of Oyl, that bottomleſs Ocean, that never fails his people; there is in Chriſt an all-ſufficiency, for all Creatures, at all times, in all places.

Chriſt is never *vàcuis manibus*, empty-handed.

The great *Cham* is ſaid to have a Tree full of Pearls hanging by cluſters, but what is the Great *Chams* tree, to Chriſt our Tree of Life, who hath all variety and plenty of fruit upon him; the happineſſe that comes to beleevers by Chriſt are ſo many, that they cannot bee numbred; ſo great, that they cannot bee meaſured, ſo copious, that they cannot be defined, ſo precious, that they cannot bee valued; all which ſpeaks out the fulneſſe and all-ſufficiency of Chriſt.

Rev. 22. 2. Chriſt is like the trees of the ſanctuary, which were both for meat, and for medicine. Ezek. 47. 12

There is in Chriſt (*plenitudo abun-*

bundantiæ, and *plenitudo redundantiæ*) a fulneſs of abundance, and a fulneſs of redundancy, as well as a fulneſs of ſufficiency.

There is in Chriſt,

1 The fulneſs of the Spirit.
2 The fulneſs of Grace.
3 The fulneſs of the Image of God.
4 The fulneſs of the God-head.
5 The fulneſs of Glory.

But I muſt not now open, nor dilate on theſe things, leſt I ſhould tire both my ſelf, and the Reader.

Plutarch in the Life of *Phocion*, tells us of a certaine Gentlewoman of *Ionia*, who ſhewed the Wife of *Phocion*, all the rich Jewels, and precious Stones ſhee had; ſhee anſwered her again, all my riches and Jewels is my Husband *Phocion*; ſo may a penitent Sinner ſay of his bleſſed Saviour, Chriſt is all my Jewels, my Riches, my Treaſures, my Pleaſures, &c. his ſufficiency is all theſe, and more

more than theſe to mee.

The *Spaniſh* Ambaſſadour comming to ſee the Treaſury of Saint *Mark* (in *Venice*) which is cried up thorow-out the World, fell a groping to finde whether it had any bottome, and being asked why, anſwered, In this amongſt other things, my great Maſters Treaſure differs from yours, in that his hath no bottome, as I finde yours to have, alluding to the Mines in *Mexico*, and *Potoſy*; but what are the *Spaniards* Treaſures to Chriſts Treaſures? a man may without much groping finde the bottome of all earthly Treaſures, but who can finde the bottome of Chriſts treaſures? ſhould all created excellencies meet in one glorified breaſt, yet they could not inable that glorious God-like Creature to ſound the bottome of thoſe riches and treaſures which are in Chriſt, *Epheſ.* 3. 8. All which ſpeaks out Chriſts all-ſufficiency; and thus much for the ſecond thing.

Ipſe Deus ſufficit ad præmium. Bern.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, If you would be good betimes, *Then you muſt know betimes, that there is a marvellous willingneſſe and readineſſe in Chriſt, to embrace, to entertain, to welcome returning Sinners, and to ſhew mercy and favour to them.*

The Young Prodigal did but think of returning to his Father, and hee ran and met him, and inſtead of kicking or killing him, hee kiſt him, and embrac'd him, his bowels rolled within him, and his compaſſions flowed out freely to him. *Ho every one that thirſteth, come yee to the Waters, and hee that hath no money, come yee, buy, and eat, yea, come buy Wine and Milk, without money and without price. Nazianzen* improveth this place thus; Oh this eaſie way of contract, hee giveth more willingly than others ſell, if thou wilt but accept, that is all the price; though you have no merits, though you have nothing in your ſelves to incourage you, yet will you accept? If you

Luke 15. 20,21,22

Iſa. 55. 1 The meaning is, ſell thy ſelf, thine own wit, reaſon, ſelf-worth, and that is all Chriſt deſires, ſaith *Auguſtin* upon the words.

you will, all is freely yours; the Waters ſhall be yours, to cleanſe you, and the Milk yours, to nouriſh you, and the bread yours, to ſtrengthen you, and the Wine yours, to comfort you; here poor Sinners are called three times to come; come ſaith Chriſt, come come, to ſhew how marvellous ready, and willing hee is, that poor ſinners ſhould taſte of Goſpel delicates, ſo in that *Joh.* 7. 37. *Jeſus ſtood and cried, if any man thirſt, let him come to mee and drink.* So in that *Rev.* 22. 17. *Let him that is a thirſt come, and whoſoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely*; ſo in that *Rev.* 3. 20. *Behold, I ſtand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will ſup with him, and hee with mee*; and ſo in that *Luke* 14. 21. *The Maſter of the Houſe ſaid to his ſervant, goe out quickly into the ſtreets, and lanes of the City, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the*

Cant. 2. 8 Chriſt comes leaping upon the Mountains and skipping upon the hills, to ſhew his readineſs and willingneſs to do good to ſouls.

the blinde. Here is no man of quality, of dignity, of worldly Pomp or Glory, or of any self-sufficiency, that is invited to the feast, but a company of poor ragged, deformed, slighted, neglected, impoverished, wounded Sinners; these are invited to feast with Christ.

Concerning this willingnesse of Christ, I shall speak more when I come to deal with Old Sinners, in the cloze of this discourse, and to that I referre you, for further and fuller satisfaction, concerning the great readinesse and willingnesse of Jesus Christ to entertaine returning Sinners.

Fourthly; If you would bee good betimes, *Then you must know betimes, that Jesus Christ is designed, sealed, and appointed by the Father, to the office of a Mediatour.*

Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son

Joh. 6. 27 The Father sealed, even God; so the Greek hath it.

Son of man shall give unto you, for him hath God the Father sealed: God the Father hath made Christs commission authentical, as men doe theirs by their seal. It is a Metaphor, a Simile taken from them who give Commissions under hand and seal. God the Father hath given it under his hand and seal, That Jesus Christ is the only person that he hath appointed, and sealed, allowed, and confirmed to the Office of our Redemption. If Jesus Christ were never so able to save, and never so willing, and ready to save poor Sinners, yet if hee were not appointed, designed, and sealed, for that work, the awakened Sinner would never look out after him, nor desire union with him, nor interest in him; and therefore it is of very great consequence to know, that God the Father hath sent and sealed Christ to bee a Saviour to his people, him hath God the Father sealed; Sealed by way of destination, and sealed by way of

of qualification, ſealed by his Doctrine, ſealed by his Miracles, ſealed by his Baptiſme, ſealed by his Reſurrection, but above all, ſealed by his glorious Unction. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed mee to preach good tidings unto the meek; hee hath ſent mee to binde up the broken-hearted, to proclaime liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Priſon to them that are bound.* To proclaime the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of Vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in *Zion*, to give unto them beauty for aſhes, the Oyl of joy for mourning, the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſſe, that they might bee called trees of Righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord, that hee might bee glorified, neither Saints, nor Angels, are ſealed and anointed to the great Work of Redemption, but the Lord Jeſus is; you ſhould alwaies look upon the Lord

Iſa. 61, 1, 2, 3 Luk. 4. 18. Chriſt was anointed of God, 1 By way of deſignation. 2 By way of qualification. 3 By way of inauguration This anointing was ordinarily uſed in the inſtalling men to offices of any eminence.

Lord Jesus as sealed and anointed to the office of a Mediatour, and accordingly plead with him.

Ah Lord! It is thy office, as thou art a sealed and an anointed Saviour and Redeemer, to subdue my sinnes, to change my nature, to sanctifie my heart, to reforme my life, and to save my soul; and therefore doe it for thy names sake; O doe it for thy Office sake, doe it for thy glories sake.

Psa. 45. 8 Acts 4. 27

Thou art anointed with the Oyl of gladnesse above thy fellows; Thou hast a larger effusion of the Spirit upon thee, than others; thou art anointed with

Acts 10. 8

the Holy Ghost, and with power after an extraordinary measure and manner, thou art indued with all Heroical Gifts and Excellencies, plentifully, abundantly, transcendently, thou art sealed and predestinated; thou art

Joh. 1. 16 Joh. 3. 34

invested into this office of Mediatorship under the Fathers hand and

and ſeal; and therefore whither ſhould I go for ſalvation, for remiſſion, for redemption, for grace, for glory, but to thee?

Fifthly, If you would bee good betimes, *then you muſt know betimes, that there is no way to ſalvation, but by Jeſus Chriſt.*

Neither is there ſalvation in any other (ſpeaking of Chriſt) for there is none other name under Heaven, given among men, whereby wee muſt bee ſaved; if ever you are ſaved, you muſt bee ſaved by him, and him only, you muſt not look for another Saviour, nor you muſt not look for a Co-ſaviour, you muſt bee ſaved wholly by Chriſt, and only by Chriſt, or you ſhall never bee ſaved; you muſt cry out, as *Lambert* did (when he was in the fire, and lifted up his hands, and fingers ends flaming) none but Chriſt, none but Chriſt. When *Auguſtus Cæſar* deſired the Senate to joyn two Conſuls with him for the better Government of the State,

Acts 4.12. ἐν ἄλλῳ. that is, by or through the mediation of any other.

Act. and Mon.

Suetonius.

the Senate answered, that they held it as a diminution of his dignity, and a disparagement of their own judgement, to joyn any with so incomparable a man as *Augustus*.

Ah Friends! It is a diminution of Christs dignity, sufficiency, and glory, in the business of your Salvation, to joyne any thing with the Lord Jesus, and it is the greatest disparagement in the world to your owne judgements, knowledge, prudence, and wisdome, to yoak any with Christ in the worke of Redemption, in the businesse of Salvation.

Augustin saith, that *Marcellina* hung Christs Picture, and the Picture of *Pithagoras* together; many there are, not only in *Rome*, but in *England* (yea, I am afraid in *London*) who joyn Christ and their Works together, Christ and their Prayers together, Christ and their Teachers together, Christ and their mournings together

gether, Christ and their hearings together, Christ and their Alms together.

Ah! what a poor, what a weak, what an impotent, what an insufficient Saviour doth these men make Jesus Christ to bee? Except these men come off from these things, and come up only to Jesus Christ, in the great business of Salvation, they will as certainly, and as eternally perish (notwithstanding their hearing, knowing, and talking much of Christ) as those that never heard of Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament, God commands them, not to wear a Garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linnen together, neither shall a Garment mingled of Linnen and Woollen come upon thee. Deut. 22 11. ch. 29. v. 19

This Law was Figurative, and shews us, that in the case of our Justification, Acceptation, and Salvation, wee are not to joyne our workes, our services, with

Phil. 3. 9, 10. Rev. 19. 8 Gal. 3. 28. Co. 2. 16

the Righteousnesse of Christ; God abhors a linsie-woolsie righteousnesse. And as by the Letter of this Law, in the Hebrewes account, one threed of wool in a Linnen garment, or one Linnen threed in a woollen Garment, made it unlawful; So the least manner of mixture in the businesse of Justification, makes all null and void. And if by Grace, then it is no more of Works; otherwise grace is no more grace: But if it bee of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work; hee that shall mixe his Righteousnesse with Christs, he that shall mix his puddle with Christs purple blood, his rags, with Christs royal robes, his copper with Christs gold, his water with Christs wine, &c. is in the ready way to perish for ever.

Rom. 11. 6 Eph. 2. 5 Rom. 5. 15, 16, 18

On Earth Kings love no Consorts, power is impatient of participation. Christ will bee *Alexander* or (*Nemo*) no body; hee will

will bee all in all in the buſineſſe of Juſtification, or hee will bee nothing at all; wee muſt ſay of Chriſt, as it was once ſaid of *Cæſar* (*ſocium habet neminem*) hee may have a companion, &c. but hee muſt not have a competitor. 1 Cor. 1. 30 Rom. 5. 19, 20

Let us ſay of Chriſt, as the Heathen once ſaid of his Petty gods (*contemno minutulos iſtos Deos, modo Jovem propitium habeam*) ſo long as hee had his *Jupiter* to friend, hee regarded them not; So, ſo long as wee have our Jeſus to friend, and his Righteouſneſs and Blood to friend, wee ſhould contemn all other things, and abhor the bringing of any thing into competition with him; a real Chriſtian cares not for any thing that hath not (*aliquid Chriſti*) ſomething of Chriſt in it. Hee that holds not wholly with Chriſt, doth very ſhamefully neglect Chriſt, *Aut totum mecum tene, aut totum omitte*, ſaith *Gregory Nazianzen*. Eph. 3. 9, 10 Pſal. 71. 15, 16, 19, compared.

There is no other name, no other nature, no other blood, no other merits, no other perſon to bee juſtified and ſaved by, but Jeſus Chriſt; you may run from Creature to Creature, and from Duty to Duty, and from Ordinance to Ordinance; and when you have wearied and tired out your ſelves in ſeeking eaſe and reſt, ſatisfaction and remiſſion, juſtification and ſalvation, in one way and another, you will bee forced after all to come to Chriſt, and to cry out, Ah! none but Chriſt, none but Chriſt. Ah! none to Chriſt, none to Chriſt, no works to Chriſt, no duties, no ſervices to Chriſt, no prayers, no tears to Chriſt, no righteouſneſs, no holineſs to Chriſt. Well Friends, remember this, that all the tears in the World cannot wipe off (meritoriouſly) one ſin, nor all the Grace and Holineſſe that is in Angels and men, buy out the pardon of the leaſt tranſgreſſion. All remiſſion is only by the

Iſa. 55. 2
Rom. 10. 3

the Blood of Christ.

Sixthly and Lastly, if you would bee good betimes, *Then you must know betimes, that the heart of Jesus Christ is as much set upon Sinners now he is in Heaven, as ever it was when hee was upon Earth.*

Christ is no lesse loving, lesse mindful, lesse desirous of Sinners eternal welfare now hee is in heaven (in a far Country) than hee was when hee lived on Earth: witnesse his continuing the Ministery of Reconciliation among poor Sinners in all ages; witnesse the constant treaties, that by his Ambassadors and Spirit hee still hath with poor Sinners, about the things of their peace, the things of eternity; witness his continual knockings, his continual callings upon poor Sinners by his Word, Rod, Spirit, to open, to repent, to lay hold on mercy, and to be at peace with him; witness his continual wooing of poor Sinners in the face of all neglects, and put-offs; in

2 Cor. 5. 20

Rev. 3. 20
Isa. 56. 4
Isa. 27. 5

Cant. 5, 2, 3.
Luke 14

Prov. 6. 9 Mat. 22. 4. 23. 37

in the face of all delaies and denials; in the face of all harsh entertainment and churlish Answers; in the face of all gain-sayings and carnal reasonings; in the face of all the scorn and contempt that wretched sinners put upon him; and witness that plaine word, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

Heb. 13.8

Christ is the same afore time, in time, and after time, hee is unchangeable in his essence, in his promises, and in his affections.

Rev. 1. 8. 11. ch. 21. 6. c. 22. 13

I am Alpha *and* Omega, *the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come.*

It was a custome among the Turks, to cry out every morning from an high Tower, God alwaies was, and alwaies will be, and so salute their Mahomet.

The Phrase is taken from the Greek Letters, whereof *Alpha* is the first, and *Omega* is the last; The first and last letter of the Greek Alphabet is a description of me, saith Christ, who am before all, and after all, who am above all, and in all, who am unchangeable in my self, and in my thoughts and good will to poor sinners; Therefore doe not

poor

poor ſouls, entertaine any hard thoughts concerning Jeſus Chriſt, as if hee was leſs mindful, leſs pittiful, and leſs merciful to poor ſculs now hee is in Heaven, than hee was when his abode was in this world.

And thus I have gone over thoſe ſix things that you muſt know concerning Chriſt betimes, if ever you would bee good betimes. When Pope *Leo* lay upon his death-bed, Cardinal *Bembus* citing a text of Scripture to comfort him, he replied (*Apage has nugas de Chriſto*) away with theſe bawbles concerning Chriſt; but I hope better things of you, and doe deſire that you will ſay of all things below this knowledge of Chriſt (that I have opened to you) as that devout Pilgrim, who travelling to *Jeruſalem*, and by the way viſiting many brave Cities, with their rare monuments, and meeting with many friendly entertainments, would often ſay, I muſt not ſtay here, this is not *Jeruſa-*

lem.

them. Ah! so doe you young men and women, in the midst of all your worldly delights and contents, cry out, Oh! wee must not stay here, this is not *Jerusalem*, this is not that knowledge of Christ that I must have, if ever I am happy here, and blessed hereafter.

4 Duty.

Fourthly and Lastly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must acquaint your selves with those that are good betimes.*

If you would be gracious in the spring and morning of your youth, then you must begin betimes to bee much in with them, who are much in with Christ, who lye near his heart, and know much of his minde: *Hee that walketh with wise men, shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed*; or as the Hebrew hath it, shall bee broken in peeces, as when an Army is broken and routed by an enemy. (*Holech* from *Halech*) walking with the

Pro. 13. 20 ירוע Shall bee broken, or shall bee worse, from רוע to bee naught.

the wise, he shall be wise, for so the Original hath it; it is not talking with the wise, but walking with the wise, that will make you wise, it is not your commending, and praising of the wise, but your walking with the wise, that will make you wise; it is not your taking a few turns with the wise that will make you wise, but your walking with the wise, that will make you wise; there is no getting much good by them that are good, but by making them your ordinary and constant companions.

'Twas the saying of one, as oft as I have been among wicked men, I return home lesse a man than I was before.

Ah! Friends, you should doe as *Joseph* in *Ægypt*, of whom the Scripture saith, *Psal.* 105. 22. (according to the Hebrew phrase) that hee tied the Princes of *Pharaohs* Court about his heart.

If ever you would gaine by the Saints, you must binde them upon your souls, you must labour to have very near, close, and intimate communion with them.

The Jews have a Proverb, that two

two dry ſticks put to a green one will kindle it; The beſt way to bee in a flame God-ward, Chriſt-ward, Heaven-ward, and Holineſs-ward, is to bee among the dry ſticks, the kindle-coals, the Saints; for as live Coals kindle thoſe that are dead; ſo lively Chriſtians will heat and enliven thoſe that are dead God-wards, Chriſt-wards, Heaven-wards, and Holineſs-wards. As Iron ſharpeneth Iron, ſo doth the face of a man his friend. Prov. 27. 17

Mens Wits, Parts, and Gifts, and induſtry, commonly grow more ſtrong, vigorous, and quick, by friendly conference and communion.

And as hee that comes where ſweet Spices and Oyntments are ſtirring, carries away a ſweet ſavour with him: ſo hee that converſeth with thoſe that are good, ſhall carry away that goodneſs and ſweetneſs with him, that ſhall render him ſweet, deſirable, and delectable to others.

Polemon.

Polemon that *Augustin* speaks of, who was all for Wine and play, &c. became a brave man when hee came acquainted with the Philosophers School. So many young men, that have been all for Wine and Women, for playing and toying, for vanity and folly, have become brave men, precious men, by the company, counsel, and example of those who were gracious. Doctor *Taylor* the Martyr, rejoyced that ever hee came into Prison, because hee came thither to have acquaintance with that Angel of God, *John Bradford* (as he calls him) so doubtless many young persons there bee that have much cause to rejoyce, and for ever to blesse the Lord, that ever they came acquainted with such and such (who fear the Lord, and who walk in his waies) for the good that they have received by them. An Ep. 130.

Algerius an *Italian* Martyr, said, hee had rather bee in Prison

Moses was of the same mind and metal, Heb. 11. 24,25,26, 27

son with *Cato*, than with *Cæsar* in the Senate-house.

Ah young men! young men, you were better bee with the people of God, when they are in the lowest and most contemptible condition, than with the great (wicked) ones of the world, when they are in all their Royalty and Glory; in the Day of Account you will finde that they have made the best Market, who have rather chosen to keep company with *Lazarus*, though in his raggs, than they would (with others) keep company with *Dives*, though in his Purple Robes.

Those that keep ill company, are like those that walk in the Sun, who are tann'd insensibly.

Well, Young men, remember this, cloaths and company doe oftentimes tell tales, in a mute, but significant language.

Tell me with whom thou goest, and I will tell thee what thou art, saith the *Spanish* Proverb. *Cicero* (though a Heathen) had rather to have no Companion, than a bad one: The Lord grant that this

this Heathen (and others among them, that were of the same minde with him) may never rise up in judgement against any of you, into whose hands this Treatise may fall.

And thus I have dispatcht those four things that you must bee acquainted with betimes, (*viz.* the Scripture, your owne hearts and conditions, the Lord Jesus Christ, and those that fear him) if ever you would be good betimes.

Secondly, *If you would bee good betimes*, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your daies, *Then you must shun the occasions of sin betimes*; A man will never begin to bee good, till he begin to decline those occasions that have made him bad, 1 *Thes.* 5. 22. *Abstaine from all appearance of evil.*

You must shun and bee shie of the very appearance of sin, of the very shewes and shadowes of sin. The word εἶδος, which is ordinarily rendred *Appearance*, signifies

Wee must shun (*quicquid fuerit male coloratum*) Whatsoever looks but ill-favouredly, as *Bernard* hath it.

fies kind, or sort; and so the meaning of the Apostle seems to be this; *Abstain from all sort, or the whole kind of evil*; from all; that is truly so, be it never so small.

The least sin is dangerous; *Cæsar* was stab'd with Bodkins, and many have been eaten up of Mice, and Lice.

The least spark may consume the greatest house, the least leak may sink the greatest ship, the least sin is enough to undoe thy soul; and therefore shun all the occasions that lead unto it.

Job 31. 1 Gen. 39 10 Psal. 26, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Job made a Covenant with his eyes; *Joseph* would not bee in the room where his Mistress was; and *David* (when himself) would not sit with vaine persons. As long as there is fuel in our hearts for a temptation, wee cannot bee secure; hee that hath Gunpowder about him, had need keep far enough off from sparkles; hee that is either tender of his credit abroad, or comfort at home, had need shun, and bee

shie

ſhie of the very ſhew and ſhadow of ſin; hee that would neither wound Conſcience nor Credit, God, nor Goſpel, had need hate the Garment ſpotted with the fleſh.

Jude 23 The ſin and the coat of the ſin is to be hated, ſaith *Ambroſe.*

In the Law, God commanded his people, not only that they ſhould worſhip no Idol, but that they ſhould demoliſh all the Monuments of them; and that they ſhould make no covenant nor affinity with thoſe who worſhipped them, and all, leſt they ſhould bee drawn by theſe occaſions to commit Idolatry with them; hee that would not taſte of the forbidden fruit, muſt not ſo much as gaze on it; and hee that would not bee bit by the Serpent, muſt not ſo much as parley with the Serpent.

Latet anguis in herba. Snakes are found among roſes. Numb. 6. 3. 4. *Quid eſt vitare peccata, niſi vitare occaſiones peccatorum? Melan.*

It is very obſervable, That in the Law, the Nazarite was not only commanded to abſtain from wine and ſtrong drink, but alſo hee might not eat Grapes, whether moyſt or dry, or any thing

What is it to avoyd sin, but to avoyd the occasions of sin?

that is made of the Vine-Tree, from the Kernels, even to the Husk; but why not these small things, in which there could be no danger of Drunkennesse? surely, lest by the contentment of these, hee might bee drawn to desire the Wine, and so bee brought on to sin, to break his Vow (and so make work for Hell, or for the Physician of souls.) God hereby forbidding the most remote occasions, shews how wary and exactly careful men should bee, to shun, and avoyd all occasions, provocations, and appearances of evil, and indeed, wee had need to keep off from slippery places, who can hardly stand fast on dry ground; hee that ventures upon the occasion of sinne, and then praies, *Lord, lead mee not into temptation.* is like him that thrusts his finger into the fire, and then praies that it may not bee burnt; or like him that is resolved to quench the fire with oyl, which in-

instead of quenching it, is as fuel to feed it, and increase it. It was a notable saying of one, (*Majus est miraculum inter vehementes occasiones non cadere, quam mortuos suscitare*) It is a greater miracle not to fall, being among strong occasions, than it is to raise up the dead; hee that would not bee defiled, must not touch Pitch; hee that would not bee burnt, must not carry fire in his bosome; hee that would not eat the Meat, must not meddle with the Broth; hee that would not fall in the pit, must not dance upon the brink; hee he that would not feel the blow, must keep off from the Train; *keep thee farre from a false matter*, *Exod.* 23. 7. Hee that will not flye from the occasions and allurements of sin (though they may seem never so pleasant to the eye, or sweet to the taste) shall finde them in the end to bee more sharp than Vinegar, more bitter than Worm-wood,

Bernard in Cant. Serm. 65.

Pro. 6. 27, 28, 29 *Non diu tutus est, periculo proximus. Cypr.* He is not long safe, that is near to danger.

more deadly than poyson.

There is a great truth in that saying of the Son of *Syrach*, *Hee that loveth danger, shall perish therein; hee that will not decline danger, shall not bee able to decline destruction.* Eccl. 3. 26, 27

Socrates speaks of two young men that flung away their belts, when being in an Idol Temple, the lustrating water fell upon them, detesting (saith the Historian) the Garment spotted by the flesh! and will you, O young men, play and toy with the occasions of sin? the Lord forbid.

There are Stories of several Heathens that have shunned and avoyded the occasions of sin, and will you dare to venture upon the occasions of sin?

Alexander would not see the woman after whom he might have lusted.

Scipio Africanus warring in *Spaine*, took New *Carthage* by storm, at which time a beautiful and noble Virgin fled to him for

for succour to preserve her chastity, hee being but four and twenty years old (and so in the heat of youth) hearing of it, would not suffer her to come into his sight, for fear of temptation, but caused her to bee restored in safety to her Father. *Aure. victor, Dio. in vita.*

Livia counselled her Husband *Augustus*, not only not to doe wrong, but not to seem to doe so, &c.

Cesar would not search *Pompeyes* Cabinet, lest hee should finde new matters of revenge.

Plato mounted upon his Horse, and judging himself a little moved with pride, did presently light from his Horse, lest hee should be overtaken with loftinesse in rideing.

Thesius is said to cut off his golden locks, lest his enemies should take advantage by taking hold of them.

Ah! Young men, young men, shall the very Heathens thus shun and fly from the occasions of

sin, and will not you? will not you, who sit under the Sun-shine of the Gospel? those will in the great day of account bee sad and sore witnesses against those that dally and play with the occasions of sin.

To prevent Carnal carefulness, Christ sends his Disciples to school, to the irrational Creatures, *Matth.* 6. 26, 30. And to prevent your closing with the occasions of sin, let me send you to school to the like Creatures, that you may learn by them to shun and avoyd the occasions of sin.

The *Sepia*, a certain kind of Fish, perceiving themselves in danger of taking, by an instinct which they have, they doe darken the water; and so many times escape the Net which is laid for them.

Geese (they say) when they fly over *Taurus*, they keep stones in their mouthes, lest by gagling, they should discover themselves to the Eagles, which are amongst the Mountains waiting for them;

them; now if all these considerations put together, will not worke you to decline the occasions of sin, I know not what will. There is a truth in that old saying,

Hee that will no evil doe,
Must doe nothing belongs thereto.

The *Israelites* must have no leaven in their houses, till the Passeover be done, lest they should bee tempted to eat of it. Exod. 12. 19.

3 Direction.

Thirdly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must remember the eye of God betimes.*

If you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your daies, then you must study Gods Omni-presence betimes. *Doth not hee see my waies, and count all my steps, for his eyes are upon the waies of man, and hee seeth all his goings? There is no darknesse, nor shadow of death, where the* Psal 139. 2---14 Job 31. 4 ch. 34. 21 22, &c.

workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

Non se putent adulteri noctis tenebris, vel parietum obtegi. Beda.

I have read that *Paphnutius* converted two famous young strumpets, *Thais* and *Ephron*, from uncleanenes, only with this Argument, that God seeth all things in the dark, when the doors are fast, the windows shut, and the curtains drawn. By this very Argument *Solomon* labours to take off his Young man from carnal and sinful courses; *And why wilt thou my son bee ravish'd with a strange Woman, and embrace the bosome of a stranger? for the waies of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he ponders all his goings.* Thou may'st deceive all the world, like that counterfeit *Alexander* in *Josephus* his Story, but *Augustus* will not be deceived, hee hath quicker and sharper eyes.

Prov. 5. 20, 21

Noli peccare, Deus videt, angeli astant. &c. Take heed what thou doest, God beholds thee, Angels observe thee.

Ah! Young men, young men, you may deceive this man, and that, and as easily deceive your selves, but you cannot deceive him, who is (πανόφθαλμος, *totus oculus*)

oculus) all-eye. As the eyes of a well-drawn picture are fastened upon thee, which way soever thou turnest, so are the eyes of the Lord. I have read of one, who being tempted to Adultery, said, they could not bee private enough, and being carried from room to room, answered, wee are not yet private enough, God is here.

Ah Friends! his eyes which are ten thousand times brighter than the Sun, compasseth thy words, thy waies, thy works, thy thoughts, thy bed, thy board, thy bench. The *Ægyptian* Hieroglyphick for God, was an eye on a Scepter, shewing that he sees and rules all things. Jer. 13. 27, ch. 29. 23

Ah Friends! All Thoughts, Words, Hopes, and Hearts, are naked, opened, dissected and quartered before that God with whom you have to doe. God is very curious and exact in marking and observing what is done by men, that he may render to every man according to his works. Heb. 4. 13 *Tetrachelismena.*

An-

Aug. de civ. Dei. l. 6. c. 10

Augustin speaks of an old *Comedian*, when having no other spectators, went usually into the Theatre, and acted before the Statues of the Gods.

Ah! Young men and Women, the eye of God should bee more to you, than all the world besides; O that the Scripture might bee written with the Pen of a Diamond upon your hearts. *Hear yee not mee* (saith the Lord) *and will you not tremble at my presence?*

Jer. 5. 21, 22

Boetius de consol. l. 5.

There is a great truth in that saying of his (*Magna nobis ex hac inest probitatis necessitas, quia omnia ante oculos judicis facimus omnia cernentis*) A great necessity of goodness is from hence put into us, because wee doe all things before the eyes of a Judge, that sees all things.

4 Direction.

Fourthly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must hearken to the voyce of Conscience betimes.*

2 Tim. 1. 3

A man will never begin to bee good, till hee begins to hearken to what Conſcience ſpeaks: So long as man turns a deaf ear to Conſcience, hee is a ſafe Priſoner to Satan, and a ſure enemy to good.

Pſal. 58. 4 Joh. 3. 20 21

Ah! how good might many have been, had they but begun betimes to hearken to Conſcience?

Ah! Young men, doe not dally with Conſcience, doe not play, doe not trifle with Conſcience, doe not ſtop your ears againſt Conſcience; hee that will not in his Youth give Conſcience audience, ſhall at laſt bee forced to hear ſuch lectures from Conſcience, as ſhall make his life a very Hell. A ſleepy Conſcience, is like a ſleepy Lion, when hee awakes, hee roars and tears, ſo will Conſcience, *Mark* 9. 22. Conſcience is (*mille teſtes*) a thouſand witneſſes for or againſt a man; hee that hath long turned the deaf ear to Conſcience, ſhall at laſt finde

Such ſhall finde Conſcience to be *Judex, index, vindex.*

finde his Conscience like *Promethevs's vulture*, that lies ever a gnawing. *Judas* found it so, and *Spira* found it so, and *Blaer* a great Counseller of *Scotland*, found it so,

Jo. Wolf. lect. mem. To. 2. ad an. 1547

I have read of one *John Hofmeister*, that fell sick in his Inne, as hee was travelling towards *Ausburge* in *Germany*, and grew to that horror of Conscience, that they were faine to binde him in his bed with chaines, where hee cried out, that hee was for ever cast off by God, and that the Promises that were set before him would doe him no good, and all because hee had wounded his Conscience, and turned a deaf ear to Conscience.

Well Young men, if you will not betimes hearken to Conscience, you shall at last hear Conscience saying to you, as the probationer Disciple said to Christ, *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*; so saith Conscience, Sinner, I have called up-

Mat. 8. 19

upon thee many a thousand times, and told thee, that I must by commission, bee thy best friend, or thy worst enemy; but thou wouldest not hear; and therefore now I will follow thee, whither ever thou goest; fast, and I will follow thee, and fill thee with horrours, and terrors; feast, and I will follow thee, and shew thee such a Hand-writing upon the wall, as shall cause thy countenance to change, thy thoughts to bee troubled, the joynts of thy loyns to bee loosed, and thy knees dashed one against another; stay at home, and I will follow thee, from bed to board; goe abroad, and I will follow thee into all places and companies, and thou shalt know that it is an evil and a bitter thing, that thou hast so often and so long neglected my calls; and disobeyed my voyce, and walkt contrary to me; how thou shalt finde a truth in that saying of *Luther* (*una guttula mala conscientia totum mare*, &c.) one drop of an evil Conscience swallows

Dan. 5. 5, 6 *Tolle conscientiam, tolle omnia.* Take away conscience, and take away all, said the Heathen.

swallows up the whole Sea of worldly joy.

Well young men, There is a day a comming, wherein a good Conscience will bee better than a good Purse, for then the Judge will not bee put off with a suite of Complements, or fair words, nor drawn aside with hope of reward; and therefore as you would bee able to hold up your heads in that day, make conscience of hearkning to the voyce of Conscience in this your day.

5 Direction.

Fifthly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must know betimes wherein true happiness lies.*

For a man will never begin to be good, till hee begins to understand wherein his happiness consists.

Quot homines, tot sententiæ, so many men, so many minds.

The Philosophers speaking of happiness, were divided into two hundred eighty eight opinions, every one intending something, and yet resolving nothing. Therefore the man in *Plutarch*, hearing

ing them wrangle about mans (*summum bonum*) chiefest good, one placing it in this, and another in that; hee went to the Market, and bought up all that was good, hoping among all, hee should not miss of it, but he did; many look for happiness in sin, others look for it in the Creatures, but they must all say, it is not in us (*Nil dat quod non habet*) nothing can give what it hath not; if the Conduit Pipe hath no water, it can give no water; if a man hath no money, he can give no money; if the Creatures have no happiness, they can give no happiness; Now this jewel, this pearl, happiness, is not to bee found in the breast, in the bosome of Creatures; in a word, because I must hasten to a close, mans happiness lies, Isa. 56. 12 Job 28. 14

First, In his communion with God, as experience and Scripture demonstrates. Happy is that people, that is in such a case (but give mee that word again) yea happy is that people, whose God is the Lord. Psal. 144. 15

Lord. A man whose soul is in communion with God, shall finde more pleasure in a desert, in a dungeon, in a den, yea, in death, than in the Palace of a Prince, than in all worldly delights and contents, &c.

Secondly, In pardon of sin, *Blessed is hee whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.* It is not, blessed is the honourable man, but blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the rich man, but, blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the learned man, but, blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the politick man, but, blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the Victorious man, but, blessed is the pardoned man; Do with me what thou wilt, since thou hast pardoned my sins, saith *Luther*.

Psal. 32. 1, 2

Thirdly, In a compleat fruition and enjoyment of God, when wee shall bee here no more. *Blessed*

ſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God. Now they ſee him but darkly, but in Heaven they ſhall ſee him face to face, they ſhall know as they are known; but of theſe things I have ſpoken largely elſewhere; and therefore ſhall ſatisfie my ſelf with theſe hints. Mat. 5. 8 1 Cor. 13. 12.

6 Direction.

Laſtly, *If you would bee good betimes, then you muſt break your covenant with ſin betimes.*

You muſt fall out with your luſts betimes; you muſt arme and fence your ſelves againſt ſin betimes; a man never begins to fall in with Chriſt, till he begins to fall out with his ſins; till ſin and the ſoul be two, Chriſt and the ſoul cannot be one: *Now to work your hearts to this, you ſhould alwaies look upon ſin under theſe notions.* Iſa. 28. 15. 18

1 Notion.

Firſt, *If you would have the league diſſolved betwixt ſin and your ſouls betimes, then look upon ſin under the notion of an enemy betimes.*

1 Pet. 2. 11 Sins, eſpecially againſt knowledge (are *peccata vulnerantia & devaſtantia.*) wounding and waſting.

Dearly beloved, I beſeech you as ſtrangers and Pilgrims, abſtain from fleſhly luſts, which war againſt the ſoul. As the Viper is killed by the young ones in her belly; ſo are poor Sinners, betrayed and killed by their owne luſts, that are nouriſhed in their boſomes.

Pittacus, a Philoſopher, challenging *Phlyon* the *Athenian* Captaine (in their Wars againſt them) to ſingle Combate, carried a Net privily, and ſo caught him, and overcame him; So doth ſin with poor Sinners, the dangerous, pernicious, malignant nature of ſin; You may ſee in the ſtory of the *Italian*, who firſt made his Enemy deny God; and then ſtabbed him to the heart, and ſo at once murdered both body and ſoul. Sin betraies us into the hand of the Devil, as *Dalilah* did *Sampſon* into the hands of the *Philiſtims*.

Sugred poyſons goe down pleaſantly; Oh! but when they are down

down, they gall and gnaw, and gripe the very heart-ſtrings aſunder, it is ſo with ſinne; Ah! ſouls, have not you often found it ſo?

When *Phocas* the Murderer, thought to ſecure himſelf by building high walls, hee heard a voyce from Heaven telling him, that though hee built his Bulwarks never ſo high, yet Sinne within would ſoon undermine all.

Ambroſe reports of one *Theotimus*, that having a diſeaſe upon his body, the Phyſician told him, that except hee did abſtain from intemperance, Drunkenneſs, Uncleanneſs, hee would loſe his eyes; his heart was ſo deſperately ſet upon his ſins, that hee cries out, then (*vale lumen amicum*) farewel ſweet light.

Ah! how did his luſts war both againſt body and ſoul?

The Old man is like a Treacherous friend, and a friendly Traitour; though it be a harder

thing to fight with a mans luſts, than it is to fight with the Croſs, yet you muſt fight or dye, if you are not the death of your ſinnes, they will prove the death of your ſouls.

As one of the Dukes of *Venice* died fighting againſt the Nauratines, with his weapons in his hand.

The Oracle told the *Cyrrheans*, (*noctesq; dioſq; belligerandum*) they could not bee happy, unleſs they waged Warre night and day; no more can wee, except wee live and dye fighting againſt our luſts.

Ah! Young men, Can you look upon ſin under the notion of an enemy, and not breake with it, and not arme againſt it?

Well, remember this, the pleaſure and ſweetneſs that follows victory over ſinne, is a thouſand times beyond that ſeeming ſweetneſs that is in ſin; and as victory over ſin is the ſweeteſt victory, ſo it is the greateſt victory; there is no conqueſt to that which is gotten over a mans own corruptions. *Hee that is ſlow to anger, is better than*

than the mighty, and hee that ruleth his ſpirit, than hee that taketh a City.

It is noble to overcome an enemy without, but it is more noble to overcome an enemy within; it is honourable to overcome fiery flames, but it is far more honourable to overcome fiery luſts.

When *Valentinian* the Emperour was upon his dying bed, among all his Victories only one comforted him, and that was victory over his worſt enemy, *viz.* his own naughty heart.

Rom. 7. 22, 23
2 Cor. 10. 3, 4, 5, 6.
Gal. 5. 17

Ah! Young men, young men, your worſt enemies are within you, and all their plots, deſignes, and aſſaults are upon your ſouls, your moſt noble part; they know if that fort-Royal bee won, all is their owne, and you are undone, and ſhall bee their ſlaves for ever; and therefore it ſtands you upon, to arme your ſelves againſt theſe inbred enemies; and if you ingage Chriſt in the quarrel, you will carry the day, and

when you shall lye upon your dying-beds, you will then finde that there is no comfort to that, which ariseth from the conquests of your own hearts, your own lusts.

2 Notion.

2 Pet. 3. 6
Gal. 3. 10
Joh. 8. 34

Secondly, *If you would break covenant with sin, if you would arm and fence your selves against sin betimes, then look upon sin as the souls bonds.*

For as bonds tye things together, so doth sin tye the sinner, and the curse together, it binds the sinner and wrath together, it links the sinner and Hell together. I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity; iniquity is a chain, a bond, now bonds and chains gall the body, and so doth sin the soul; and as poor Captives are held fast in their Chains, so are sinners in their Sins, they cannot redeem themselves by price, nor by power.

2 Tim. 2. *ult.*

Ah! Young men, young men,

no

no bondage to ſoul-bondage, no ſlavery to ſoul-ſlavery; the *Iſraelites* bondage under *Pharaoh*, and the Chriſtians bondage under the *Turks*, is but the bondage of the body, of the baſer and ignoble part of man, but yours is ſoul-bondage, ſoul-ſlavery, which is the ſaddeſt and greateſt of all.

Auguſtine ſaith of *Rome*, that ſhee was the great Miſtreſs of the world, and the great drudge of ſin.

Ah Friends! You ſhould never look upon your ſinnes, but you ſhould look upon them as your bonds, yea, as the worſt bonds that ever were; all other Chains are golden Chains, Chains of Pearl, compared to thoſe Chains of Iron and Braſs; thoſe chains of luſts, with which you are bound. Ah! who can thus looke upon his chains, his ſins, and not loathe them, and not labour for freedome from them? *Juſtinus* the Emperours Motto was (*Libertas res ineſtimabilis*) liberty is unvaluable; if Civil liberty bee, ſurely Spiritual-liberty is much more; if you ask ſouls that were once in a ſtate of bondage, but

are now Christs free-men, they will tell you so.

Chrysost. Hom. 19 in prior. Epist. ad Corinth.

It was a good observation of *Chrysostome*, that *Joseph* was the free-man, and his Mistress was the servant, when she was at the beck of her own lusts, when she tempted, and he refused. Such as live most above sin and temptation, are the greatest free-men, others that live under the power of their lusts, are but slaves, and in bonds, though they dream and talk of freedome, *Tit.* 3. 3.

3 Notion.

Thirdly, *If you would break league with sin, and arm and fence your selves against it, then look alwaies upon sin under the notion of fire.*

Jude 23. *Arpazontes* signifies a violent snatching, as the tender hearted Mother to save the life of her child, pulls it hastily, and with violence out of the fire.

And others save with fear, pulling them out of the Fire. Oh! snatch them out of their sins, as you would snatch a child, a friend, out of the fire; or as the Angel snatch'd *Lot* out of *Sodome*, hastily, and with a holy violence; natural Fire may burn the house, the goods,

goods, the treasure, the servant, the childe, the wife, the body, but this Fire burns the soul, it destroys and consumes that noble part, which is more worth than all the treasures of a thousand Worlds; every man hath a hand, and a heart to quench the Fire which burns his Neighbours house, but few men have either hands or hearts to quench the Fire that burns their Neighbours souls, this is, and this shall be for a lamentation.

I have read of one, who upon the violence of any temptation to sin, would lay his hand upon burning coals, and being not able to abide it, would say to himself, Oh! how unable shall I bee to endure the pains of Hell? and this restrained him from evil; but what is the fire of Hell to the fire of sin? now to provoke you to look upon Sin under the notion of Fire, consider with me the sundry resemblances between material and immaterial fire, between corporal common Fire, and between this

D. Denisons threefold resolution. par. 2. Sect. 2.

this spiritual fire, Sin. As,

First, Fire is terrible and dreadful; A Ship on fire, an House on fire, oh how dreadful is it? so sin set home upon the Conscience, is exceeding terrible and dreadful. *Mine iniquity* (so the Hebrew) *is greater than I can bear*; sin or iniquity is often put for the punishment of sin, by a Metonimy of the efficient for the effect; for Sin is the natural parent of punishment, *Mine iniquity*, saith *Cain*, *is so great, and lies so heavie, so terrible and dreadful upon my conscience, that it cannot be forgiven*; and thus by his diffidence he stabs two at once, the Mercy of God, and his own soul. So *Judas*, *I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood, and hee went and hanged himself.*

Gen. 4. 13 *Mentiris Cain*, thou liest *Cain*, saith one on the Text. Mat. 27. 3, 4, 5

As there is no fighting with a mighty Fire, so there is no bearing up, when God sets home sin upon the Conscience; a man will then chuse strangling, or hanging, rather than living under such wounds and lashes of conscience.

Histories

Hiſtories abound with inſtances of this nature; but I muſt haſten to a cloſe.

Secondly, Fire is moſt dangerous and pernicious when it breaks forth of the Chimny, or of the Houſe, ſo it is with ſin. Sin is bad in the eye, worſe in the tongue, worſer in the heart, but worſt of all in the life. Fire when out of its proper place, may doe much hurt in the houſe, but when it flames abroad, then it doth moſt miſchief to others. 2 Sam. 12. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

Sin in the heart may undoe a man, but Sin in the life may undoe others, as well as a mans ſelf. Set a guard upon thy Eye, a greater upon thy Heart, but the greateſt of all upon thy Life. Job 31. 1 Pro. 4. 23 Eph. 5. 15

Salvian relates how the Heathen did reproach ſome Chriſtians, who by their lewd lives, made the Goſpel of Chriſt to bee a reproach, where (ſaid they) is that good Law which they doe beleeve? where are thoſe rules of *Salvianus de G. D. l* 4

of godlineſs which they doe learn, they read the Holy Goſpel, and yet are unclean; they hear the Apoſtles Writings, and yet are drunk; they follow Chriſt, and yet diſobey Chriſt; they profeſs a holy Law, and yet doe lead impure lives.

But the lives of other Chriſtians have been ſo holy, that the very Heathens obſerving them, have ſaid, ſurely this is a good God, whoſe ſervants are ſo good.

It is brave, when the Life of a Chriſtian is a Commentary upon Chriſts life.

Auguſtin. One ſpeaking of the Scripture, ſaith, (*Verba vivenda, non legenda*) they are words to be lived, and practiſed, not read only.

Plutarch. A Heathen adviſeth us to demean our ſelves ſo circumſpectly, as if our enemies did alwaies behold us. *Epictetus.* And ſaid another, for ſhame, either live as Stoicks, or leave off the name of Stoicks. Sirs, live as Chriſtians, or lay down the name of Chriſtians.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Fire hardens, it makes the weak and limber clay to become ſtiff and ſtrong for the Potters uſe. So ſin hardens, it hardens the heart againſt the commands of God, the calls of Chriſt, and the wreſtlings of the Spirit. Jer. 5. 3. ch. 19. *ult.* Iſa. 9. 13

As you ſee in *Pharaoh*, the *Jews*, and moſt that are under the ſound of the Goſpel.

Ah! how many hath this fire (Sin) hardened in theſe daies, by working them to ſlight ſoul-ſoftening means, and by drawing them to entertain hardening thoughts of God, and to fall in with ſoul-hardening company, and ſoul-hardening principles, and ſoul-hardening examples, of hardened and unſenſible Sinners? one long ſince thus complained, that they did (*patientius ferre Chriſti jacturam, quam ſuam*) more calmly paſs by the injuries done to Chriſt, than thoſe which are done unto themſelves; This age is full of ſuch hardened unſenſible ſouls. Jer. 2. 25. ch. 18. 12

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Fire is a lively active element, so is Sin.

Gen, 22. Psal. 51. Job 3. Mat. 26. Rom. 1. 15, &c.

Ah! how lively and active was this fire in *Abraham*, *David*, *Job*, *Peter*, *Paul*, and other Saints? though Christ by his Death hath given it its mortal wound, yet it lives, and is, and will bee active in the deareſt Saints. Though Sin and Grace were not born together, neither ſhall they dye together; yet while beleevers live in this World, they muſt live together. There is a Hiſtory that ſpeaks of a Fig-tree that grew in a ſtone-wall, and all means was uſed to kill it, they cut off the branches, and it grew again, they cut down the body, and it grew again, they cut it up by the root, and ſtill it lived, and grew until they pulled down the ſtone-wall; till Death ſhall pull down our ſtone-walls, Sin will live, this fire will burn.

Iſodore the Monk, was very much out, who vaunted that he had felt in himſelf no motion to ſin forty years together.

Wee may ſay of Sin: as ſome ſay of Cats, that they have many lives; kill them and they will live

live again, kill them again, and they will live again; ſo kill Sin once, and it will live again, kill it again, and it will live again, &c. Sin oftentimes is like that Monſter *Hydra*, cut off one head, and many will riſe up in its room.

Fifthly: Fire is of a penetrating nature, it pierceth and windeth it ſelf into every corner and chink, and ſo doth Sin winde it ſelf into our thoughts, words, and works; it will winde it ſelf into our underſtandings, to darken them; and into our judgements, to pervert them; and into our wills, to poyſon them; and into our affections, to diſorder them; and into our conſciences, to corrupt them; and into our carriages, to debaſe them. Sin will winde it ſelf into every duty, and every mercy, it will winde it ſelf into every one of our enjoyments and concernments.

Isa. 1. 5, 6 Rom. 7 13, 17 Sinne is (*malum Catholicum*) A Catholick evil. (*Quodcunque in peccato, peccatum eſt*) whatſoever is in ſin, is ſin.

Hannibal having overcome the *Romans*, put on their armour on

on his Souldiers; and so by that policy, they being taken for *Romans*, won a City, but what are *Hannibals* wiles, to Sins wiles, or Satans wiles? if you have a minde to be acquainted with their wiles, look over my Treatise, called, *Precious remedies against Satans Devices.*

Psal. 21. 9

2 Pet. 2. 5, 6
Pro. 6. 32
Eccl. 9. 18
Pro. 13. 13
ch. 20. 29.
Pro. 11. 3. ch. 15. 25. ch. 21, 7

Sixthly and lastly, Fire is a devouring, a consuming element, it turns all fuel into ashes; It is a Wolf that eats up all; so Sin is a fire that devours and consumes all, it turned *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* into ashes, it hath destroyed the *Chaldean*, *Persian*, and *Grecian* Kingdomes, and will at last destroy the *Roman* Kingdome also; this Woolf ate up *Sampsons* strength, *Absoloms* beauty, *Achitophels* policy, and *Herods* glory, &c. It hath drowned one World already, and will at last burn another, even this. Oh the hopes, the hearts, the happiness, the joyes, the comforts, the souls that this fire (Sin) hath con-

consumed and destroyed! &c.

Peter Camois a Bishop of *Berry* in *France*, in his draught of Eternity, *Numb.*7. 5. tells us, that some devout personages caused those words of the Prophet *Isaiah* (to bee written in Letters of Gold upon their Chimney-peeces) *Who amongst us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* Isa. 33. 14

Ah! Young men, young men, I desire that you may alwaies look upon sin under the notion of fire, yea, as such fire as laies the foundation for everlasting fire, for everlasting burnings, and this may work when other things will not.

I have read of a grave and chaste Matron, who being moved to commit folly with a lewd Ruffian, after some discourse, shee called for a pan of burning coals, requesting him for her sake to hold his finger in them but one hour, he answered, it is

an unkind requeſt, to whom ſhe replied, that ſeeing he would not doe ſo much as to put one finger upon the coals for one hour, ſhee could not yeeld to doe that, for which ſhe ſhould bee tormented, both body and ſoul in Hell fire for ever. The Application is eaſie, &c.

4 Notion.

Fourthly, *If you would break with ſin betimes, if you would arm againſt ſin in the ſpring and morning of your daies, then you ſhould look upon ſinne under the notion of a Theef.*

And indeed ſin is the greateſt Theef, the greateſt Robber in the world; it robbed the Angels of all their glory, it robbed *Adam* of his Paradiſe and felicity, and it hath robbed all the ſons of *Adam* of five precious Jewels, the leaſt of which was more worth than Heaven and Earth.

2 Pet. 2. 4
Gen. 3.

1 It hath robbed them of the holy and glorious Image of God, which would have been fairly engraven

graven upon them, had *Adam* ſtood, &c.

2 It hath robbed them of their Son-ſhip, and of Sons have made them ſlaves.

3 It hath robbed them of their friendſhip, and made them enemies.

4 It hath robbed them of their communion and fellowſhip with Father, Son, and Spirit, and made them ſtrangers and Aliens.

5 It hath robbed them of their glory, and made them vile and miſerable. It hath robbed many a Nation of the Goſpel, and many a Pariſh of many a happy guide, and many a Chriſtian of the favour of God, the joyes of the Spirit, and the Peace of Conſcience.

Well did one of the Fathers call Pride and Vainglory, the ſweet ſpoiler of ſpiritual excellencies, and a pleaſant Theef.

Oh! the health, the wealth, the honour, the friends, the relations that ſinne hath robbed thouſands of.

Nay, It hath robbed many of their gifts, their arts, their parts, their memory, their judgement;

yea, their very reaſon, as you may ſee in *Pharaoh*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belſhazzar*, *Achitophel*, *Haman*, *Herod*, and thoſe *Babyloniſh* Princes that accuſed *Daniel*.

And ſo in *Menippus* of *Phenicia*, who having loſt his goods, ſtrangled himſelf. And ſo *Dinarcus Phidon*, at a certain loſſe, cut his owne throat to ſave the charge of a Cord. And ſo *Auguſtus Caſar* (in whoſe time Chriſt was born) was ſo troubled and aſtoniſhed at the relation of an overthrow from *Varus*, that for certain months together, hee let the hair of his head and beard grow ſtill, and wore it long; yea, and other whiles would run his head againſt the doors, crying out, *Quintilius Varus*, deliver up my Legions again; by all which it is moſt apparent, that ſin is the greateſt theef in all the world.

Suetonius.

Oh! Then who would not break League and Covenant with it, and bee ſtill in preſſing of God to doe Juſtice upon it? &c.

Fifthly,

5 Notion.

Fifthly, *If you would break with ſin, and arme and fence your ſelves againſt ſin betimes, then you muſt look upon ſin under the notion of a burden betimes.* Nah. 1. 1 Hab. 1. 1 Mal. 1. 1

And indeed, Sin of all burdens is the heavieſt burden in all the World. *Innumerable evils have compaſſed mee about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon mee, ſo that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me.* Pſal. 40. 12 And again, *Mine iniquities are gone over my head* (ſaith the ſame perſon) *as an heavy burden,* Pſal. 38. 4 they are too heavie for mee to bear. Sin is a weight that eaſily beſets poor ſouls, it is a burden that ſo troubles them, and puzzles them, that ſo curbs them, and girds them, that ſo preſſes, and oppreſſes them, as that it wrings many bitter tears from their eyes, and many ſad and grievous ſighs and groans from their hearts. Heb. 12. 1 Rom. 7. 13 *ult.*

Again, As Sin is a burden to

Chriſtians; ſo it is a burden to Heaven, it made Heaven weary to bear the Angels that fell; no ſooner had they ſinned, but Heaven groans to bee eaſed of them; and it never left groaning till Juſtice had turned them a groaning to Hell.

Jude 6.

Again, As Sin is a burden to Heaven, ſo it is a burden to the Earth, witneſſe her ſwallowing up *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, their Wives, Children, Goods, Servants, &c. Ah Sinners! your ſins makes the very earth to groan; they make the earth weary of bearing you. Oh! how doth the earth groan and long to ſwallow up thoſe earthly wretches, whoſe hopes, whoſe hearts, are buried in the earth, theſe ſhall have little of Heaven, but enough of Earth when they come to dye.

Numb. 16 26. 35

Cornelius a Lapide, tells a Story, that hee heard of a famous Preacher, who ſhewing the bondage of the Creature, brings in the Crea-

Rom. 8. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

Creature complaining thus; Oh! that wee could ſerve ſuch as are godly! Oh! that our ſubſtance and our fleſh might bee incorporated into godly people, that ſo wee might riſe into glory with them; Oh! that our fleſh might not bee incorporated into the fleſh of Sinners, for if it be, we ſhall goe to Hell, and would any Creatures goe to Hell? Oh! we are weary of bearing ſinners, wee are weary of ſerving of ſinners; thus the Creatures groan, thus the Creatures complain, the Sinners ſins forcing them to it, &c.

Again, Sin is a burden to God, *Behold, I am preſſed under you, as a Cart is preſſed that is full of ſheaves*, by this plain pithy country compariſon, God ſhewes how ſadly hee is preſſed and oppreſſed, how ſorely hee is wearied and tired with thoſe peoples ſins. Divine Patience is even worn out; Juſtice hath lift up her hand, and will bear with them no longer. God ſeems to Amos 2. 13

groan under the pressure of their sinnes, as a Cart seems to doe under a heavy load; of this God complains by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Thou hast made mee to serve with thy sinnes, thou hast wearied mee with thine iniquities.* I am as weary of your sinnes, as a Travelling Woman is weary of her pains, saith God. Sin was such a burden to God, that hee sweeps it off with a sweeping flood, *Gen.* 7. &c.

Isa. 43. 24

Again, Sinne is a burden to Christ, it made him sweat, as never man sweat; It made him sweat great drops of clotted or congealed bloud; Sin put Christs whole body into a bloody sweat, it made him groan pittiously, when hee bare our sinnes in his body on the Tree. Sin made his soul heavy even to the death, and had hee not been one that was mighty, yea, that was Almighty, hee had fainted and failed under his burden. And thus you see what a burden sinne is to man, to the

Luke 22. 44
A strange watering of a Garden *Bern.*
1 Pet. 2. 24
Isa. 9. 6

the Creatures, to Heaven, to Earth, to God, to Christ; and therefore as you would break with sin betimes, look alwaies upon it as a burden, yea, as the greatest and heaviest burden in all the world, &c.

6 Notion.

Sixthly and lastly, *If you would break Covenant with sin, and arm, and fence your selves against it betimes, then you must look upon it betimes under the notion of a Tyrant.* Tit. 3. 3.

And indeed, sin is the worst and greatest Tyrant in the world. Other Tyrants can but tyrannize over our bodies, but Sin is a Tyrant that tyrannizes over both body and soul, as you may see in the sixth and seventh of the *Romans*; sin is a Tyrant that hath a kind of jurisdiction in most mens hearts, it sets up the Law of Pride, the Law of Passion, the Law of Oppression, the Law of Formality, the Law of Hypocrisie, the Law of Carnality, the Law of Self-love, the

the Law of Carnal Reason, the Law of Unbeleef, and strictly commands subjection to them, and proclaims fire and sword to all that stand out; this Saints and Sinners, good men and bad, doe sufficiently experience.

Thales, one of the seven *Sages*, used to say, that few Tyrants lived to be old, but it is far otherwise with this Tyrant Sin.

Sin is a Tyrant of many thousand years standing, and though it hath had many a wound, and many a foil, and received much opposition, yet still it plaies the Tyrant all the World over. O! the hearts that this Tyrant makes to ake, the souls that this Tyrant makes to bleed.

Pharaohs tyranny was nothing to Sins tyranny, this Tyrant will not so much as suffer his slaves to sleep, They sleep not, except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall. The wicked are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. *There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God.*

Pro 4. 16

Isa. 57. 20, 21

Other Tyrants have been brought

brought down, and brought under by a Humane power, but this cannot, but by a Divine, the power of man hath brought down many of the Tyrants of this World, but it is only the power of Christ, that can bring down this Tyrant, that can cast down his strong holds, 2 *Cor.* 10. 3, 4, 5, 6, &c. therefore engage Christ in the conflict, draw him into the battel, and in the end the conquest will be yours.

Vitellius, who had been Emperour of all the World, yet was driven thorow the streets of *Rome* stark naked, and thrown into the River *Tyber*, &c.

Andronicus the Emperour, for his cruelty towards his people, was by them at last shametully depos'd, and after many contumelies, hanged up by his heels.

Ptolomy was put on a Cross. *Bajacet* in an Iron Cage. *Phocas* broken on the wheel. *Lycaon* cast to the Doggs (as well as *Jezabel.*) *Attalus* thrust into a Forge. King *Gath* into a Beer-barrel, &c. But none of

of these that have tamed these Tyrants, that have brought down these mighty *Nimrods*, have been able to tame, to bring under the Tyrants, the sins, the lusts, that have been in their own bosoms; many a man hath had a hand in bringing down of worldly Tyrants, who notwithstanding have dyed for ever by the hand of a Tyrant within, &c.

CHAP. VIII.

AND thus much for the Directions that young men must follow, if they would bee good betimes, if they would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of their daies. I shall now give some briet answers to the Young mans Objections, and the Old mans scruples, and so close up this discourse.

Object. 1.

But some young men may object and say, You would have us to bee good betimes, and to seek and serve the Lord

Lord in the Prime-rose of our daies. But it may bee time enough hereafter to follow this Counsel; wee are young, and it may bee time enough for us to minde these things hereafter, when we have satisfied the flesh so and so, or when wee have got enough of the World, and laid up something that will stand us in stead, and that may oyl our joynts when we are old. Now

To this Objection I answer,

First, That it is the greatest folly and madnesse in the world to put off God, and the great things of eternity, with may-bees; what Tradesman, what Merchant, what Mariner, so mad, so fooliſh, so blockiſh, as to put off a present season, a present opportunity of profit and advantage, upon the account of a may-bee? It may bee I may have as good a season, it may bee I shall have as golden an opportunity to get, and to inrich my self as this is; and therefore farewell to this. No men that are in their right minds will argue

argue thus; and why then ſhould you, eſpecially in the things that are of an everlaſting concernment to you.

I have read of one *Monarcho*, a frantick *Italian*, who thought that all the Kings of the Earth were his Vaſſals, and as frantick are they, who wilfully neglect preſent ſeaſons of grace, upon the account of a future may-be, &c.

Secondly, I anſwer, it may be if thou neglecteſt this preſent ſeaſon and opportunity of grace, thou mayeſt never have another; it may be mercy may never knock more, if thou doſt not now open; it may be Chriſt ſhall never bee offered to thee more, if now thou doſt not cloſe with him, and accept of him; it may bee the Spirit will never ſtrive more with thee, if now thou doſt reſiſt him, and withſtand him; it may bee a pardon ſhall never bee offered to thee more, if now thou wilt not take it; it may bee the Goſpel ſhall never ſound more in thy ears, if now

Young men, if you will but goe into burial places, you ſhall finde Graves exactly of your length.

now thou wilt not hear it, now ſet one may-be againſt another may-be, ſet Gods may-be againſt thine own may-be; but,

Thirdly, Doubtleſſe there are many thouſand thouſands now in Hell, who have pleaſed themſelves, and put off God, and the ſeaſons of grace, with a may-bee, hereafter may bee time enough, It may bee when I have gratified ſuch a Luſt, and when I have treaſured ſo much of the World, I will return, and ſeek, and ſerve the Lord, but before ever this ſeaſon or opportunity came, Juſtice hath cut the threed of their Lives, and they are now miſerable for ever; and now they are ſtill a curſing themſelves, becauſe they have ſlipt their golden opportunities upon the account of a may-be, &c. But,

Fourthly and laſtly, This putting off of God, and the preſent ſeaſons of Grace with a may-bee, is very provoking to God, as you may ſee, if you will but read, from

It was an unſpeakable vexation to King *Lyſimachus*, that his ſtaying to drink one draught of water loſt him his Kingdome.

from the twentieth verſe to the three and thirty of the firſt of *Proverbs*. Nothing ſtirs and provokes a Maſter more, than his ſervants putting off his ſervice or his commands with a may-be; it may be I will, it may be I may doe this and that; nothing puts a Maſter ſooner into a heat, a flame, than this; nor nothing puts God more into a flame than this, as you may ſee by comparing *Pſal.* 95. *verſ.* 6. to the end, with that third of the *Hebrews*, and the 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, read the words, and tremble at the thought of a maybee, at the thoughts of putting off of God, and the ſeaſons of grace.

I have read of two, who cut off their right hand one for another, and then made it an excuſe, a put off, they were lame, and ſo could not ſerve in the Gallies of *Francis* the firſt, King of *France*, but this practice of their did ſo inſenſe and provoke the King, that hee ſent them both to the Gallows.

I ſuppoſe the Reader is not ſo young, but knows how to apply it.

Object. 2.

If I ſhould begin to bee good betimes, and to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of my daies, I ſhould loſe my friends, I ſhould loſe their favour, for they are carnal and worldly, and had rather I ſhould ſeek after gold, than God, the Creature, than Chriſt, Earth, than Heaven, &c.

Now to this I anſwer, Surely you are out, for

Firſt, This is the high-way, the ready way to gain the beſt, the ſureſt, and the ſoundeſt friends. *When a mans waies pleaſe the Lord, hee maketh even his enemies to bee at peace with him.* Prov. 16. 7. When a man falls in with God, God will work the Creatures to fall in with him. *Joſeph* found it ſo, and *Jacob* found it ſo, and *Job* found it ſo, the three Children Job 5. 23, --28.

found it ſo, and *Daniel* found it ſo, as you all know that have but read the Scripture. And many in this age (as bad as it is) have found, that the beſt way to make friends, is firſt, to make God our friend. Ah! young men, young men, you ſhall not loſe your friends (by ſeeking and ſerving of the Lord in the ſpring and morning of your daies) but only exchange bad ones for good ones, the worſt for the beſt; hee that gives up himſelf betimes to the Lord, ſhall have God for his friend, and Chriſt for his friend, and the Angels for his friends, and the Saints for his friends; Chriſt will be to ſuch,

Luke 15. 7. 10.
Iſa. 6. 7, 8, 9
Heb. 4. 13
Iſa. 59. 16, 17
Iſa. 44. 24
Mal. 3. 6
Pſal. 121. 4, 5

Firſt, *An omnipotent friend.* Secondly, *An omniſcient friend.* Thirdly, *An omni-preſent friend.* Fourthly, *An indeficient friend.* Fifthly, *An independent friend.* Sixthly *An immutable friend.* Seventhly, *A watchful friend.* Eigthly, *A loving friend.* Ninthly, *A faithful friend.* Tenthly, *A compaſſionate friend.* Eleventhly, *A cloſe friend.*

There

There is a friend that sticketh closer than a Brother. Prov. 18. 24. such a friend is Christ, and such a friend is as ones owne soul, a rare happinesse, hardly to bee match'd. 1 Joh. 4. 16. Tit. 1. 2. Isa. 63. 9

Twelfthly, *An universal friend*, a friend in all cases, and a friend in all places. Christ is so a friend to every one of his, as if hee were a friend to none besides: Hence it is that they say, not only our Lord, our God, but my Lord, and my God. Christ is such an universal friend, as that hee supplies the place, and acts the part of every friend. Luk. 1. 43 Joh. 20. 28 Phil. 4. 19

Thirteenthly, *Hee is our first friend*, Psal. 90. 1. before wee had a friend in all the world, he was our friend, *Prov.* 8. 21. Joh. 13. 1

Lastly, *Hee is a constant friend, Whom hee loves, hee loves to the end.* *Alexander* the Great cannot cut that knot of friendship that is tied betwixt Christ and his.

Augustus Cæsar would not suddenly entertain a league of friendship with any, but was a constant friend to those hee loved

ed (*Amare nec cito desisto, nec temere incipio*) late ere I love, as long ere I leave; Where Christ begins to love, hee alwaies loves, *Jer.* 31. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*: Now who would not venture the losse of all friends in the World, to gaine such a friend as this is?

Ah! Young men and women, let mee say to you, what *Seneca* said to his friend *Polibius*, (*Fas tibi non est de fortuna conqueri, salvo Cæsare*) never complaine of thy hard fortune, as long as *Cæsar* is thy friend; so say I, never complaine of your losse of Friends, so long as by losing of them, you gain Christ to bee your Friend.

Secondly, Thou wert better bee without their friendship and favour, than to enjoy it upon any sinful and unworthy accounts, thou wer't better run the hazard of losing thy friends, and their favour, by seeking and serving the Lord in the Prime-

rose

roſe of thy daies, than to run the hazard of loſing God, Chriſt, Heaven, Eternity, and thy Soul for ever, by neglecting the things of thy peace. Mat. 16. 26 Mar. 8. 46

It was a gallant return which the noble *Rutilius* made his friend, requeſting of him an unlawful favour, in ſuch language as this, I had as good bee without ſuch a friend, as with him, who will not let mee ſpeed in what I ask; to whom hee replied, I can want ſuch a friend as you, if for your ſake, I muſt doe that which is not honeſt.

The Application is eaſie.

Well Young men, remember this, the torments of a thouſand hells, were there ſo many, comes far ſhort of this one voyce, to bee turned out of Gods preſence with a (*Non novi vos*) I know you not. Mat. 7. 23

Ah! Young man, Young man, thou wer't better ten thouſand thouſand times to bee caſt out of the thoughts and

hearts of thy carnal friends, and relations, than to bee caſt out of
Gen. 4. Gods preſence with curſed *Cain*, for ever, than to bee excommuni-
Heb. 12. 23 cated out of the general Aſſembly of the Saints, and Congregation of the firſt-born which are written in Heaven; and therefore away with this Objection; But,

Thirdly, The favour and friendſhip of ſuch carnal perſons, is very fickle and inconſtant, it is very fading and withering; Now they ſtroake, and anon they ſtrike; now they lift up, and anon they caſt down; now they ſmile, and anon they frown; now they kiſs, and anon they kill; now they cry *Hoſanna*, *Hoſanna*, and anon they cry, crucifie him, crucifie him;
Eſth. 7. *Haman* is one day feaſted with the King, and the next day made a feaſt for Crowes; The Princes of *Babylon* were highly in King
Dan. 6. *Darius* his favour one day, and caſt into the Lions Den the next; The Scribes and Phariſees that cri-

cried up *Judas* one day, did in effect bid him goe and hang himself the next day.

Such mens favour and friendship, are as *Venice* glasses, quickly broken, and therefore not much to bee prized or minded. Histories abound with instances of this nature; but I must hasten, only remember this, that every daies experience tells us, that wicked men can soon turn Tables, and cross their books, their favour and friendship is usually like to a morning cloud, or like to *Jonas* Gourd, one hour flourishing, and the next hour withering; and why then shouldest thou set thy heart upon that which is more changeable than the Moon? But

Mat. 27. 3, 4, 5

Valerian, *Valens*, *Belisarius*, *Bajazet*, *Pythias*, *Dionysius*, *Pompey*, *William* the Conquerour and many others have found it so

Fourthly and lastly, Who but a mad man would adventure the losse of the Kings favour to gaine the favour of his Page? who but a stark *Bedlam* would run the hazard of losing the Judges favour upon the Bench, to purchase

Glaucus, who changed his armour of gold with *Diomedes* for his armour of Brass, stands upon record for a fool.

chaſe the good will of the Priſoner at the Bar?

Socrates preferred the Kings countenance before his Coin; and ſo muſt you prefer the favour of God; the countenance of Chriſt, and the things of eternity, above all the favour and friendſhip of all the men in the world; when your neareſt friends, and deareſt relations, ſtand in competition with Chriſt, or the things above, you muſt ſhake them off, you muſt turn your backs upon them, and welcome Chriſt, and the things of your peace; hee that forſakes all relations for Chriſt, ſhall certainly finde all relations in Chriſt, hee will bee father, friend, husband, childe; he will be every thing to thee, who takeſt him for thy great All.

Pſal. 4. 6, 7

Pſa. 45. 10
Mat. 10. 37
Luke 14. 26, 27.

Object. 3.

I but I ſhall meet with many reproaches from one and other, if I ſhould labour to be good betimes, If I ſhould ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of my youth,

Now

Now to this I answer,

First, What are Reproaches to the great things that others have suffered, for Christ, his Gospel, and the maintaining of a good Conscience? what is a prick of a pin to a stab at the heart? what is a chiding, to a hanging, a whipping, to a burning? no more are all the reproaches thou canst meet with, to the great things that others have suffered for Christs sake.

Hebrews, ch. 10, 11. read the ten Persecutions.

Ah! Young men, you should bee like the *Scythian* that went naked in the Snow, and when *Alexander* wondred how hee could endure it, answered, I am not ashamed, for I am all fore-head

So should you in the cause and way of Christ, you should not be ashamed, you should be all fore-head, you should be stout and bold.

Colonus the *Dutch* Martyr, under all his reproaches, called to the Judge that had sentenced him to death, and desired him to lay his hand

hand upon his heart, and then asked him, whose heart did most beat, his or the Judges; All the reproaches in the world, should not so much as make a Christians heart beat, they should not in the least trouble him, nor disturb him; But,

Secondly, I answer, That all the reproaches thou meetest with in the way of Christ, and for the sake of Christ, they doe but adde Pearls to thy Crown, they are all additions to thy happinesse and blessednesse. If yee bee reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are yee; for the Spirit of Glory, and of God, resteth upon you; on their part, hee is evil spoken of, but on your part hee is glorified; the more you are reproached for Christs sake on earth, the greater shall bee your reward in Heaven, they that are most loaded with Reproaches here, shall bee most loaden with glory hereafter. Christ hath written their Names in golden Letters in his book

1 Pet. 4. 14

Mat. 5 1, 12

book of Life, that are written in black Letters of reproach for his ſake on Earth. 'Twas a good ſaying of one, A Reproacher (ſaith hee) is beneath a man, but the Reproached that bear it well, are equal to Angels; of all Crowns, the reproached mans Crowne, will weigh heavieſt in Heaven. But,

Thirdly, I anſwer, the beſt men have been moſtly reproached, *David* was, *Pſalm* 69. 7. *Pſalm* 89. 50. *Pſalm* 119. 22. *Pſal.* 31. 11. *Pſalm* 109. 25. and *Job* was, *Job* 19. 35. ch. 20. 3. *Job* 16. 10. and *Jeremiah* was, *Jer.* 20. 7. 10. Yea, this hath been the common portion of the people of God in all ages of the World, in *Nehemiah*'s time it was ſo, *Neh.* 1. 3. *And they ſaid unto mee, the remnant that are left of the captivity, are in great affliction and reproach.* In *Davids* time it was ſo, *Pſal.* 79. 4. and *Pſalm* 44. 13, 14. And in *Jeremiah*'s time it was ſo, *Lam.* 5. 1. *Remember, O Lord,*

Chryſoſt. So was *Joſeph, Mephiboſheth, Naboth,* and in latter times, *Luther,* whom they ſaid died deſpairing when hee was alive to confute it. And that *Beza* run away with another mans wife. And that *Calvin* was branded on the ſhoulder for a rogue but there would bee no end of this ſtuff, ſhould I ſay all that might be ſaid.

Lord, what is come upon us, consider and behold our reproach. And in *Daniel's* time it was so, *Dan.* 9. 16. *Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us*, and it was so in the Apostles time, *Rom.* 3. 8. *And not rather as wee be slanderously reported*, as some affirm that wee say, let us doe evil, that good may come, whose damnation is just, 2 *Corinth.* 6. 8. *By honour, and dishonour; by evil report; and good report*; as *Deceivers, and yet true*: so in that, 1 Tim. 4. 10. *For therefore wee both labour and suffer reproach, because wee trust in the living God, &c.* And it was so in the Primitive times, for when the Christians met together before Sun to pray, the Heathens reported of them, that they worshipped the Sun, and aspired after Monarchy, and committed Adulteries, and unnatural uncleannesses: Now who is troubled, who complaines of that which is a common lot, as cold, win-

Tertullian.

Winter, Sickneſſe, Death, &c. No more ſhould any complain of reproaches, it being the common lot of the people of God in all ages; yea, Chriſt himſelf was ſadly reproached, falſly accuſed, and ſtrangely traduced, diſgraced, and ſcandalized; he was called a Glutton, a Drunkard, a friend of Publicans and Sinners, and judged to uſe the black Art, caſting out Devils by *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils; Chriſt hath ſuffered the greateſt, and the worſt Reproaches, why then ſhould you be afraid to wear that Crown of Thorns that Chriſt hath wore before you? there is a great truth in what hee ſaid, (*Non poteſt qui pati timet, ejus eſſe qui paſſus eſt*) hee that is afraid to ſuffer, cannot bee his Diſciple, who ſuffered ſo much; if the Maſter hath been marked with a black Coal, let not the ſervant think to goe free. I am heartily angry (ſaith *Luther*) with thoſe that ſpeak of my ſufferings, which

Mat. 9. 34. ch. 12. 24

Tertul. de fuga in perſecut.

which if compared with that which Christ suffered for mee, are not once to bee mentioned in the same day; But,

Fourthly, I answer, that all reproachers shall at last be arraigned at the highest Bar of Justice, for all the reproaches that they have cast upon the people of God.

2 Pet. 4. 4. *Xenizontai Blasphemountes.* Wonder and Blasphem.

They think it strange (or they think it a new world) that you run not with them to the same excesse of ryot, speaking evil of you: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

I am in an extasie (saith *Picus Mirandula*) to think how prophane men rail upon those now, whom one day they will wish they had imitated. It was excellent counsel that the Heathen Oratour gave his Hearers (*Ita vivamus, ut rationem nobis reddendam arbitremur*) let us live as those that must give an account of all at last.

Cic. 4. in Verr.

Chrysostome brings in Christ com-

comforting his Disciples against reproaches, speaking thus unto them; what is the wrong grievous to you? that now they call you Seducers, and Conjurers, it will not bee long before they shall openly call you the Saviours and blessings of the whole World, that time that shall declare all things that are now hid, shall rebuke them for their lying words against you, and shall kindle the splendor of your vertue; So they shall be found Lyers, evil speakers, false accusers of others; but you shall bee more clear and illustrious than the Sun, and you shall have all men witnesses of your glory. Such as wisely and humbly bear reproaches now, shall judge reproachers at last. But,

Mal. 3. 17
Mic. 7. 9, 10, 11
1 Cor. 6. 3, 4

Fifthly, I answer, That God doth many times, even in this life; bear sad witness and testimony against the reproachers of his people; *I will blesse them that blesse thee, and I will curse them that*

Gen. 12. 3
2 Sam. 16 11, 12, 13

Divine justice is like *Vulcans* Iron net, that took the Gods, it apprehends and condemns all that are reproachers, and enemies to his people.

that curse thee; God will even in this life curse them with a witness, who curse them that hee blesseth; *Pharaoh* found it so, and *Saul* found it so, and *Jezabel* found it so, and *Haman* found it so, and the Princes of *Babylon* found it so, and the *Jews* find it so to this very day.

And Oh the dreadful Judgements and Curses that God hath poured out upon the reproachers of his Name, of his Son, of his Spirit, of his Word, of his Ordinances, and of his people, in these daies wherein wee live. I might give you many sad instances of such in our daies, whose feet justice hath taken in the snare, men of abstracted conceits, and sublime speculations, and indeed such usually prove the great wise fools, who like the Lark, soareth higher and higher, peering, and peering, till at length they fall into the Net of the Fowler, and no wonder, for such persons usually are as censorious, as

as they are curious.

Sixthly, I answer, *Paul* rejoyced more in his suffering Reproaches for Christs sake, than he did in his being wrapt up in the third Heaven, 2 *Cor.* 12. 10. *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christs sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong.* And therefore you have him often a singing this song, *I Paul a Prisoner of Jesus Christ*: not I *Paul* wrapt up in the third Heaven: Hee look't upon all his sufferings, as Gods love-tokens, hee look't upon all reproaches, as pledges and badges of his Son-ship; and therefore joyes and glories under all. Christ shewed his love to him in wrapping him up in the third Heaven, and hee shewed his love to Christ, in his joyful bearing of Reproaches for his sake. *Paul* rattles his chain (which hee bears for the Gospel) and was proud of it, as a Woman of her Ornaments, saith *Chrysostome.*

(*Crudelitas vestra gloria nostra*) your cruelty, is our glory, said they in *Tertullian*, fire, sword prison, famine, are alldelightful to me, saith *Basil.*

Now why ſhould that bee matter of trouble and diſcouragement to you, that was matter of joy and rejoycing to him? ſhall hee look upon Reproaches as a Crown of Honour, and will you look upon Reproaches as a Crown of Thorns!

Sufferings are the enſigns of heavenly Nobility, ſaith *Calvin*.

O! look upon Reproach as a Royal Diadem, look upon it as Chriſts Livery, and count it your higheſt ambition in this World, to wear this Livery for his ſake, who once wore a Crowne of Thornes for your ſakes; When *Babylas* was to dye, hee required this favour, to have his chains buried with him as the enſigns of his honour. But

It was an obſervation of Mr. *John Lindſay*, that the very ſmoak of Mr. *Hamilton*, converted as many as it blew upon.

Seventhly, I anſwer, That by a wiſe and gracious behaviour under the Reproaches thou meeteſt with for Chriſts ſake, thou mayeſt bee inſtrumental to win others to Chriſt.

It was a notable ſaying of *Luther* (*Eccleſia totum mundum convertit ſanguine & oratione*) the Church con-

converted the whole World by blood and prayer.

Divers have been won to Christ, by beholding the gracious carriages of Christians under their sufferings and reproaches for Christ.

Wee read of *Cicilia*, a poor Virgin, who by her gracious behaviour under all her sufferings and reproaches for Christ, was the means of converting four hundred to Christ.

Adrianus beholding the gracious cheertul carriages of the Martyrs, under all their sufferings and reproaches, was converted to Christ, and afterwards suffered Martyrdome for Christ.

Justin Martyr was also converted, by observing the holy and chearful behaviour of the Saints, under all their sufferings and reproaches for Christ. During the cruel Persecutions of the Heathen Emperours, the Christian Faith was spread thorow all places of the Empire, because the

See also the History of the Council of *Trent*, 418. 2. Edit.

oftner they were mown down (saith *Tertullian*) the more they grew.

And *Austin* observed, that though there were many thousands put to death for professing Christ, yet they were never the fewer for being slain.

Ah! Young men, you may by a wise and gracious bearing of Reproaches for Christ, bee instrumental to win others to Christ; and therefore never plead there is a Lion in the way; but I must hasten; and therefore in the eighth and

Last place, consider, how bravely several of the very Heathens have bore reproaches, and let that provoke you, in the face of all reproaches, to seek and serve the Lord in the morning of your youth, &c.

When *Demosthenes* was reproached by one, I will not, saith hee, strive with thee in this kind of fight, in which he that is overcome is the better man.

When

When one came and reproached *Xenophon*, saies hee, you have learned how to reproach, and I have learned how to bear Reproach.

And *Aristippus* (the Philosopher) said, You are fit to cast reproaches, and I am fit to bear reproaches.

Demochares an Athenian Oratour, was sent to King *Philip* as Embassadour, *Philip* asked him, how hee might pleasure the *Athenians*, forsooth, said hee, if you will hang your self; the Prince patiently sent him home again, and bid him ask whether were more Noble, the patient hearer, or venter of such unseemly language.

When one wondred at the patience of *Socrates* towards one who reviled and reproached him; if wee should meet one, saith hee, whose body were more unsound than ours, should wee bee angry with him, and not rather pitty him? why then should wee

not doe the like to him whose soul is more diseased than ours?

Augustus Cæsar, (in whose time Christ was born) bid *Catullus* the railing Poet to Supper, to shew that he had forgiven him.

Plutarch in vita Peric.

It is a notable Example that wee finde of one *Pericles*, who as hee was sitting with others in a great meeting, a foul-mouthed fellow bitterly reproached him, and railed all the day long upon him, and at night when it was dark, and the meeting up, the Fellow followed him, and railed at him, even to his door, and hee took no notice of him, but when hee came at home, this is all hee said, Friend it is dark, I pray let my man light you home.

Themistocles professed, that if two waies were shewed him, one to Hell, and the other to the bar, hee would chuse that which went to Hell, and forsake the other.

Josephus reports of that *Herod* that is made mention of in *Acts* 12. 23. that when one *Simon* a Lawyer, had grievously reproached and scandalized him before the people, hee sent for him

him, and caused him to sit downe next to him, and in a kind manner he spake thus to him. Tell mee, I pray thee, what thing thou seest fault-worthy, or contrary to the Law, in me? *Simon* not having any thing to answer, besought him to pardon him, which the King did, and was friends with him, and dismissed him, bestowing gifts on him.

Ah! Young men, young men, shall the very Heathen make nothing of Reproaches, shall they bear up so prudently and bravely under the greatest loads of reproaches, and will not you? will not you, who in your light, in your mercies, and in all Gospel engagements, are so highly advanced above them? Oh that none of them may bee called to the Bar in the great Day, to witness against any of you, into whose hands this Treatise shall fall; and so much by way of Answer to the third Objection. But,

4 Object.

Fourthly, The young man objects and saies, *You press us to bee good betimes, and to seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of our daies, but we observe, that most men minde not these things, but rather give liberty to themselves, to walk in waies that are most pleasing to the flesh, and why then should we be singular and nice, wee were better doe as the most doe? &c.* Now to this I answer.

1 That though bad examples are dangerous to all, yet usually they prove most dangerous and pernicious to young persons, who are more easily drawn to follow examples, than precepts, especially those examples that tend most to undoe them, 2 *King.* 15.9. It is said of *Zachariah*, the King of *Israel*, *that he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his Fathers had done, he departed not from the sins of* Jeroboam, he would bee as his Father was, and doe as his Father did, what ever came on it.

Præcepta docent, exempla movent, Precepts may instruct, but examples doe perswade.

So

So the *Samaritans*, of whom it is said, 2 *King.* 17. 41. *These Nations feared the Lord* (that is, they made some kinde of profession of the true Religion, as the ten Tribes had done) *and served their graven Images* (too) *both their children, and their childrens children*, (did thus) *as did their Fathers, so doe they unto this day*: By evil examples they were both drawn to Idolatry, and rooted and confirmed in it; so the maine reason why the Kingdome and Church of *Judah* were so setled in their Idolatry, that there was no hope of reclaiming them, was this, that their Children remembred their Altars and their Groves by the green Trees upon the high Hills, *Jer.* 17. 1, 2. Tinder is not apter to take fire, nor Wax the impression of the Seal, nor Paper the Ink, than youth is to follow ill examples.

You may see in *Radbod*, King of *Phrisia*, who coming to the Font to bee baptized, asked what was be-

become of his Anceſtors, anſwer was made, that they died in a fearful ſtate unbaptized, hee replied, that hee would rather periſh with the multitude, than goe to Heaven with a few.

Æthiopians lame themſelves if their King bee lame, ſaith *Diodorus*. *Elian* reports that there was a Whore that did boaſt that ſhee could eaſily get ſcholars away from *Socrates*, but *Socrates* could get away no ſcholars from her.

I remember the Heathen brings in a young man, who hearing of the adulteries and wickedneſſes of the gods, ſaid, what, doe they ſo? and ſhall I ſtick at it? no, I will not. Sinful examples are very drawing, and very incouraging, many have found it ſo to their eternal undoing; thoſe that have no ears to hear what you ſay, have many eyes to ſee what you doe. Bad Princes make bad Subjects, bad Maſters make bad Servants, bad Parents make bad Children, and bad Husbands make bad Wives; it is eaſier for the bad to corrupt the good, than for the good to convert the bad; it is eaſier to run downe the Hill with company, than to run up the Hill alone.

I would deſire all young men often

often to remember that saying of *Lactantius*, (*Qui malum imitatur, bonus esse non potest*) hee who imitates the bad, cannot bee good. Young men, in these professing times, stand between good and bad examples, as *Hercules* in his dream stood between Vertue and Vice. Solicited by both, chuse you must who to follow. Oh that you were all so wise, as to follow the best; as a Woman that hath many Suters, is very careful to take the best; so should you. Life, Heaven, Happiness, Eternity, hangs upon it.

Sin is bad in the eye, worse in the tongue, worser in the heart, but worst of all in the life, and that because it then indangers other mens souls, as well as a mans own.

But before I come to the second answer, let mee leave this note or notion with those who make no conscience of undoing others by their examples, *viz.*

That a more grievous punishment is reserved for them who cause others to offend, than for them which sin by their occasion, or example.

Thus the Serpent was punished more than *Eve*, and *Eve* more than *Adam*.

So

So *Jezabel* felt a greater and sorer Judgement than *Ahab*. To sin (saith one) hath not so much perdition in it, as to cause others to sin. Friends, you have sins enough of your owne to make you for ever miserable; why should you by giving bad examples to others, make your selves far more miserable? the lowest, the darkest, the hottest place in Hell, will bee for them that have drawn others thither by their example. *Dives* knew, that if his Brethren were damned, hee should bee double damned, because hee had largely contributed to the bringing of them to Hell by his wicked example; and therefore hee desires that they might be kept out of Hell, (not out of any love, or good will to them) but because their comming thither would have made his hell more hot, his torments more insufferable; But

Mat. 23. 15

Luk. 16. 28

Secondly, I answer, *If you sin with others, you shall suffer with others*; if you will partake of other

ther mens sinnes, you shall also partake of other mens plagues. They that have been (like *Simeon* and *Levi*) brethren in iniquity, they shall bee brethren in misery; they that have sinned together impenitently, shall be sent to Hell joyntly, they shall perish together eternally. If you will needs bee companions with others in their sins, you shall bee sure to bee companions with them in their sorrows. The old world sin together, and are drowned together; the *Sodomites* burning in lusts together, were burnt with Fire and Brimstone together. *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, they sin together, they murmure and provoke the Lord together, and the earth opens her mouth, and swallows them up together. *Pharaoh* and his Hosts pursue *Israel* together. and they are drowned in the Sea together. *Zimri* and *Cosbi* committed folly, uncleanness together, and *Phineas* stabs them both together. The Hebrew Doctors

Rev. 18. 4

Non minus ardebit, qui cum multis ardebit. *August.* He burns no less that burns with company.

Gen. 6.
Gen. 19.

Numb. 16. 26-34.

Exod. 14

Numb. 25

Doctors have a very pretty Parable to this purpose; A man planted an Orchard, and going from home, was careful to leave such Watch-men as might both keep it from strangers, and not deceive him themselves, therefore hee appointed one blind, but strong of his limbs, and the other seeing, but a Cripple. These two in their Masters absence conspired together, and the blind took the lame on his shoulders, and so gathered the fruit; their Master returning and finding out their subtilty, punished them both together.

So will justice deal with you at last, who sin with others; therefore take heed young men of doing as others doe. But

Obedientia non discutit Dei mandata, sed facit. Prosper.

Thirdly, I answer, *You must not live by examples, but by precepts*; you are not to look so much at what others doe, as at what God requires you to doe, *Exod.* 23. 2. *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to doe evil, neither shalt thou speak*

speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgement, Rom. 12. 2. *Fashion not your selves like unto this world*; that is, doe not fashion and conform your selves to the corrupt customs and courses of wretched worldlings, who have made Gold their God, and gain their glory; the running cross to a Divine command, cost the young Prophet his life (though hee did it under pretence of Revelation from God) as you may see in that sad Story, 1 *King.* 13. *chap. &c.* (*Non parentum, aut majorum authoritas, sed Dei docentis imperium*) the command of God must outweigh all authority and example of men. *Jerome.*

And wee must bee as careful in the keeping of a light Commandement, as an heavy Commandement: saith a *Rabbi*, Divine Commands must bee obeyed against all contrary reasonings, wranglings, and examples. *Austin* brings in some excusing their compliance with the sinful

full customes and examples of those times, in drinking healths, thus: Great personages urged it, and it was at the Kings banquet, where they judged of Loyalty by Luxury, and put us upon this election, drink or dye, the not drinking of a health had been our death; he gives this answer, that God who sees that for love to him, and his commands, thou wouldest not conforme to their drunken customes, will give thee favour in their eyes, who thus threatned thee to drink.

The complaint is antient in *Seneca*, that commonly men live not *ad rationem*, but *ad similitudinem*. *Seneca de vita beata. c. 1.*

Ah! young men, you that dote so much upon examples now, will finde that a stinging, terrifying question, when put home by God, or Conscience, *who hath required these things at your hands?* Isa. 1. 12. But

Fourthly, I answer, *Company and allurements to sin, will be found no sufficient excuse for sin.*

If *Eve* lay her fault on the Serpent, and *Adam* lay his on *Eve*, God will take it off, and lay the curse

Gen. 3.

curſe on both. *Sauls* provocation by his people (and by *Samuels* long ſtay) to offer Sacrifice would not bear him out; but for his diſobedience, hee muſt loſe both his Crown and Life. The young man in the *Proverbs*, though tempted and ſolicited by the Harlot, yet hath a Dart ſtruck thorow his heart; though *Jonah* did plead Gods gracious inclinations to ſhew mercy, and his fear of being diſproved; yea, and though hee might have pleaded his fear of cruel and ſavage uſage from the *Ninivites* (whoſe hearts were deſperately ſet upon wickedneſs) and his deſpair of ever doing good upon a people ſo blinded, and hardened; and that they were *Gentiles*, and hee a *Jew*, and why ſhould hee then be ſent with ſo ſtrange, ſo terrible a meſſage, to ſuch a People, nothing being more hateful and diſtaſteful to a Jewiſh Pallate; but all theſe pleas and excuſes will not bear off the blow; *Jonah* muſt

1 Sam. 15. 14, 15, 26, 27

Prov. 7. 14, 15, 21

Oculos quos peccatum claudit, pœna apperit. Gre. The eyes that sinne shuts, affliction opens, and *Jonah* found it so.

into the Sea for all this, yea, hee must to the bottome of Hell, as himself phrases it. It is in vaine for the Bird to complain, that it saw the Corne, but not the Pitfall, or for a Fish to plead, it saw the Bait, but not the Hook. So it will bee in vaine for Sinners at last, when they are taken in an infernal Pit-fall, to plead company and allurements by which they have been inticed to undoe their souls for ever.

Dionysius the *Sicilian* King, to excuse himself from the present delivery of the Golden Garment hee took from his God *Apollo*, answered, that such a robe as that was, could not bee at any season of the year useful to his god, for it would not keep him warme in the Winter, and it was too heavy for the Summer, and so put off his Idol god; but the God of spirits, the God of all flesh, will not bee put off with any excuses or pretences, when hee shall try and judge the children of men: But

Fifth-

Fifthly and lastly, I answer, *That it is a very great judgement to bee given up to follow evil examples*: a man given up to evil examples, is a man sadly left of God, wofully blinded by Satan, and desperately hardened in sin; it speaks a man ripe for wrath, for ruine, for Hell, *Jer. 6. 21.* **Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks before this people, and the Fathers and the Sons together shall fall upon them; the neighbour and his friend shall perish.* Oh! it is a dreadful thing when God shall make the sinful examples of others to bee stumbling-blocks to a people, at which they shall stumble and fall, and perish, for ever; good had it been for such persons, that they had never been born, as Christ once spake concerning *Judas*.

The *Rhodians* and *Lydians* enacted several Laws, that those Sons which followed not their Fathers in their Vertues, but followed vicious examples, should bee disinherited, and their Lands given to

Mat. 18. 7

* This particle Behold, is sometimes a note of derision, Gen. 3. 22. 2 A note of attention often, Isa. 28. 6 Mal. 1. 1 Luke 1. 20 3 A note of admiration often. 4 A note of asseveration. 5 A note of castigation; in all these senses wee may take it here. *Varro.*

the most vertuous of that race, not admitting any impious heir whatsoever to inherit; and doe you think that God will not dis-inherit all those of Heaven and happiness, who follow vicious examples? doubtless he will, 1 *Cor.* 10. 5, 11.

5 Objection.

The Fifth and last Objection (I shall mention) is this, *God is a God of mercy, in him are bowels of mercy, yea a Sea, an Ocean of mercy; hee loves mercy, hee delights in mercy, and he is ready to shew mercy to poor Sinners, when they are even at the last cast, when there is but a short stride between them and the Grave, between them and Eternity, as wee see in his extending mercy to the Theef, and in his giving a pardon into his hand, and the assurance of Paradise into his bosome, when hee was ready to bee turned off the Ladder of life; and therefore I may spend the Prime-rose of my daies in following sin, and the delights, pre-*

profits, vanities, and contents of this world, and at last cast, I may have mercy, as well as the Theef. God is a God made up of mercy, and surely hee will not deny some crums of mercy to a poor Sinner in misery, &c.

Now to this Objection I shall give these following answers.

First, *God is as just as he is merciful*, witnesse his casting the Angels out of Heaven, and *Adam* out of Paradise; witness all the Threatnings, the Curses, the Woes that the Bible is filled with, from one end to the other, witnesse the hell, the horrour, the terrour and amazement that hee raises in the consciences of sinners; witnesse the devastations that hee hath made of the most stately flourishing Towns, Cities, Countries and Kingdomes, that have been in all the World; witness the variety of diseases, calamities, miseries, dangers, deaths, and hells, that alwaies attend the inhabitants of the world; but above

God is as well all-hand to punish, as hee is all grace to pardon.

all, witneſſe Chriſts treading the Wine-preſs of his Fathers Wrath; witneſſe his hiding his face from him, and the pouring out of all his diſpleaſure and vengeance upon him.

Valerius lib. 6. cap. 5

Zeleucus the *Locrenſian* Lawgiver, thruſt out one of his own Sons eyes, for his tranſgreſſing of a wholeſome Law, which he had enacted, but God the Father thruſt out both Chriſts eyes for our tranſgreſſing of his Royal Law; Oh! the juſtice and ſeverity of God. But

Secondly, I anſwer, That there is not a greater evidence of blindneſſe, prophaneneſſe, hardheartedneſſe, ſpiritual madneſſe, and helliſh-deſperateneſſe in all the World, than to make that an Argument, an incouragement to ſin (*viz.* the mercy of God) which ſhould bee the greateſt Argument under Heaven to keep a man from ſin, as all know that have but read the Scripture, neither are there any Sinners in the World, that God delights to rain

rain Hell out of Heaven upon, as upon ſuch, who by their abuſe of mercy, turne the God of mercy, into a God of Clours, and goe on out-daring Juſtice it ſelf, *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. *And it come to paſſe, when hee heareth the words of this curſe, that hee bleſſe himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, (God is a God of mercy) though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to adde drunkenneſſe to thirſt*: The Lord will not ſpare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealouſie, ſhall ſmoak againſt that man, and all the curſes that are written in this book, ſhall lye upon him, and the Lord ſhall blot out his name from under Heaven. In theſe words you may obſerve, that God is abſolute in threatning, to ſhew that hee will be reſolute in puniſhing, *Pſal.* 11. 5, 6 *The wicked, and him that loveth iniquity, doth his ſoul hate. Upon the wicked he ſhall raine ſnares, fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt; this ſhall be the portion of their cup.*

Read Iſa. 22. 12, 13, 14, 15. and Ezek. 24. 11, 12, 13, 14.

A lover of iniquity, is a liver in iniquity upon choice.

Ah! That all poor Sinners would make these two Scriptures their companions, their constant bedfellows, till they are got above that sad temptation of turning the mercy of God into an incouragement to sin.

Whilst *Milo Crotoniates* was tearing asunder the stock of an Oak, his strength failing him, the cleft suddenly closing, was held so fast by the hands, that hee became a prey to the Beasts of the field: All the abusers of mercy, will certainly, and suddenly, become a prey to the Justice of God, that will rent and tear them in peeces, as the Psalmist speaks, *Psal.* 50. 22. *Wo, wo, to that soul that fights against God with his owne mercies*; that will be bad, because hee is good; that will bee sinful, because he is merciful; that will turn all the kindnesses of God (that should bee as so many silver cords, to tye him to love and obedience) into arrows, and so shoot them back into the heart

heart of God. Abuſed mercy will at laſt turn into a Lion, a fierce Lion, and then woe to the abuſers and deſpiſers of it. But

Thirdly, In anſwer to that part of the Objection, concerning the Theef on the Croſſe, I offer theſe things briefly to your thoughts.

First, *That as one was ſaved to teach Sinners not to deſpair, ſo another was damned, to teach them not to preſume.* *Exemplum latronis ſervati eſt admirandum, non imitandum.*

A Pardon is ſometimes given to one upon the Gallows, but who ſo truſts to that, the rope may bee his hire; It is not good (ſaith one) to put it upon the Pſalm of *miſerere*, and the neck verſe; for ſometimes he proves no Clerk, and ſo hangs for it.

Secondly, It is an Example without a promiſe, here is an example of late Repentance, but where is there a promiſe of late Repentance?

Oh! Let not his late and ſudden converſion, bee to thee a temp-

temptation, till thou haſt found a promiſe for late and ſudden converſion; it is not examples, but promiſes that are foundations for Faith to reſt on; hee that walks by an example of mercy, without a precept to guide him, and a promiſe to ſupport him, walks but by a dark Lanthorne, that will deceive him; well young man, remember this, examples of mercy increaſe wrath, when the heart is not bettered by them; But

Thirdly, This was a rare miracle of mercy, with the glory whereof Chriſt did honour the ignominy of his Croſs; and therefore wee may as well look for another Crucifying of Chriſt, as look for a Sinners converſion, when hee hath ſcarce time enough to reckon up all thoſe particular duties, which make up the integrity of its conſtitution. But

Fourthly, I anſwer, This Theef knew not Chriſt before, hee had not refuſed, neglected, nor ſlighted

slighted Christ before, the Sermon on the Cross was the first Sermon that ever hee heard Christ preach, and Christs Prayer on the Crosse, was the first Prayer that ever hee heard Christ make; hee knew not Christ, till hee met him on the Crosse (which proved to him a happy meeting) his case was as if a Turk, or a Heathen, should now bee converted to the Faith; and therefore thou hast little reason, O young man, to plead this example, to keep Christ, and thy soul asunder, who art every day under the call, the intreaties and wooings of Christ. But

Fifthly and lastly, I answer; The circumstances of time, and place, are rightly to bee considered; Now when Christ was triumphing on the Cross over Sin, Satan, and the World, when he had made the Devils a publick spectacle of scorne and derision, when hee was taking his leave of the World, and entring into his glory; Now hee puts a Pardon into the Theefs hand,

hand, and crouds other favours and kindneſſes upon him.

As in the *Roman* Triumphs, the Victor being aſcended up to the Capitol in a Chariot of State, uſed to caſt certaine peeces of Coyn among the people for them to pick up, which hee uſed not to doe at other times: So our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the day of his Triumph, and ſolemn Inauguration into his heavenly Kingdome, ſcatters ſome heavenly Jewels, that this Theef might pick up; which he doth not, nor will not doe every day; Or as in theſe daies it is uſual with Princes to ſave ſome notorious Malefactors at their Coronation, when they enter upon their Kingdomes in triumph, which they doe not uſe to doe afterwards; So did Jeſus Chriſt carry it toward this Theef; but this is not his ordinary way of ſaving and bringing ſouls to glory; and therefore doe not, O young man! let not the Theefs late converſion, prove

a

a temptation, or an occasion of thy delaying thy repentance, and trifling away the Prime-rose of thy daies in vanity and folly. And thus much may suffice to have been spoken by way of answer to the young mans Objections. I shall now speak a few words to Old men, and so close up. Now

CHAP. IX.

IS it so commendable, so desirable, and so necessary for young men to bee good betimes, to seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of their youth, as hath been sufficiently demonstrated in this Treatise? Oh then that I could so wooe aged persons, as to win them (who yet have put off this great work) to seek and serve the Lord, before their glass be out, their sun set, and their souls lost for ever.

Oh that that Counsel of the Prophet might take hold upon your hearts, *Give glory to the Lord your God,* Jer. 13.16

God, before he cauſe Darkneſs, and before your feet ſtumble (through age) upon the dark mountains; and while yee look for light, he turn it into the ſhadow of death, and make it groſs darkneſs.

I, but aged ſinners may reply; *Is there any hope, any help for us?* is there any probability? is there any poſſibility, that ever ſuch as wee are ſhould return and finde mercy and favour with the Lord? wee who have lived ſo long without him, wee that have ſinned ſo much againſt him, we that to this day are ſtrangers to him, yea in arms againſt him: Is there any hope that wee white-headed Sinners, who have withſtood ſo many thouſand offers of Grace, and ſo many thouſand motions of the Spirit, and ſo many thouſand checks of Conſcience, and ſo many thouſand tenders of Chriſt, and Heaven, that ever we ſhould obtain mercy, that ever wee ſhould have our old hearts turned, our Millions of Sins pardoned, our vile na-

natures changed, and poor ſouls ſaved, &c.

I anſwer, That there is hope even for ſuch as you are; all the Angels in Heaven, and all the men on Earth, cannot tell, but that you, even you, may obtaine mercy and favour, that your Souls dye not; with the Lord nothing is impoſſible, and for the grace of the Goſpel, nothing is too hard: Now this I ſhall make evident by an induction of particulars. Thus

First, All were not called nor ſent to work in the Vine-yard, at the firſt hour, ſome were called at the third hour, others, at the ſixth, others, at the ninth, and ſome at the eleventh. God hath his ſeveral times of calling ſouls to himſelf: the eleventh hour was about five in the afternoon, an hour before Sun-ſet, when it was even time to leave work; and yet at this hour ſome were called, imployed, and rewarded with the reſt.

Mat. 20. 1. -- 17. The *Roman* penny was ſeven pence half penny

Some

Some of the Fathers by the ſeveral hours mentioned in this Parable, doe underſtand the ſeveral ages of man, *viz.* childhood, youth, middle-age, and old-age, wherein poor ſouls are called and converted to Chriſt; the ſcope of the Parable is, to ſignifie the Free-grace of God in the calling of ſome in the ſpring and morning of their daies, and in the calling of others in their old-age, in the evening of their daies. But

Gen. 12. 4, Joh. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. c. 7. 50

Secondly, *Abraham* in the Old Teſtament, and *Nicodemus* in the New, were called and converted in their old-age, when there were but a few ſteps between them and the Grave, between them and Eternity.

I have read of one *Caius Nearius Victorius*, who was an old man three hundred years after the Apoſtles time, and had been a Pagan all his daies, and in his old-age, hee enquired and hearkened after Chriſt, and ſaid hee would bee a Chriſtian,

an; *Simplicianus* hearing him say so, would not beleeve him, but when the Church saw a work of Grace indeed upon him, there was shouting and dancing for gladnesse, and Psalms were sung in every Church, *Caius Marius Victorius* is become a Christian; And this was written for a wonder, that hee, in his old age, and in his gray-hairs, should become a gracious Christian.

Aretius also speaks of a certaine man in his time; It is no feigned story, saith hee, for I saw the man with mine owne eyes, hee was one that had been a most vile and desperate Sinner, a Drunkard, a Swearer, a wanton Gamester, and so hee continued to his Gray-hairs; but at last it pleased God to set his sins in order before him, and the man was so troubled in Conscience, that hee threw himself down upon the ground, calling unto Satan to take him away, provoking Satan to take him away; Devil, take thy

owne, Devil take thine owne, I am thine owne, take thy owne: whereupon (saith *Aretius*) prayer was made for him; Christians prayed, they fasted and prayed, they prayed night and day; and it pleased God at last, that this poor aged Sinner revived, converted to God, lived a godly life afterwards, and dyed comfortably.

Therefore let not the gray-headed Sinner despair, though his spring bee past, his summer overpast, and hee arrived at the fall of the leaf. But

Thirdly, Divine Promises shall bee made good to returning souls, to repenting souls, to beleeving souls, bee they young or old, 2 *Chron.* 30. 9. *The Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if you return unto him,* Joel 2. 13. *And rent your heart, and not your Garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger,*

Isa. 1. 18
Jer. 3. 12
Isa. 43, 22, 23, 24, 25. ch. 57. 17, 18.
Jer. 51. 5
John 3. 16
Mark 16. 16.

ger, and of great kindneſs, and repenteth him of the evil, Iſa. 55. 7. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him returne unto the Lord, and hee will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for hee will abundantly pardon* : or hee will multiply to pardon. More of this you may ſee by reading of the Scriptures in the Margent : all ſorts of Sinne ſhall bee pardoned to all ſorts of beleeving and repenting ſinners.

The new *Jeruſalem* hath twelve Gates, to ſhew that there is every way acceſs for all ſorts and ranks of ſinners, to come to Chriſt. Hee was born in an Inne, to ſhew that hee receives all comers, Young and Old, Poor and Rich, &c. But

Fourthly, The Lord hath declared by Oath, a greater delight in the converſion and ſalvation of poor Sinners (whether they are young or old) than in the deſtruction and damnation of ſuch,

Ezek. 33. 11. *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live:* Turne yee, turne yee, from your evil waies? for why will yee dye? O yee houſe of *Iſrael*! Two things make a thing more credible.

1 The quality, or dignity of the perſon ſpeaking.

2 The manner of the ſpeech: Now, here you have the great God, not only ſpeaking, promiſing, but ſolemnly ſwearing, that hee had rather poor ſinners ſhould live, than dye; bee happy, than miſerable; therefore deſpair not, O aged Sinner! but return unto the Lord, and thou ſhalt bee happy for ever. But

una guttula plus valet, quam cælum & terra. Luther. One little drop is more worth than Heaven and earth.

Fifthly, There is vertue enough in the precious blood of Jeſus Chriſt, to waſh and cleanſe away all ſin; not only to cleanſe away the Young mans ſins, but alſo to cleanſe away the Old mans ſins; not only to cleanſe a Sinner of twenty

twenty years old, but to cleanſe a Sinner of fifty, ſixty, yea, a hundred years old, 1 *Joh.* 1. 7. *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin*, not ſimply from ſin, but from all ſin; there is ſuch a power and efficacy in the Blood of Chriſt, as is ſufficient to cleanſe all ſorts of Sinners, from all ſorts of Sinnes; there is vertue in the blood of the Lamb, to waſh out all the ſpots that are in the oldeſt Sinners hearts; and therefore let not old Sinners deſpair, let not them ſay, there is no hope, there is no help, as long as this fountain, the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt is open, for all ſorts of Sinners to waſh in. But

Sixthly, The call and invitations of Chriſt in the Goſpel, are general and indefinite, excludeing no ſort of Sinners, *Revel.* 3. 20. *Behold, I ſtand at the door, and knock, if any man* (mark the indefiniteneſſe of perſonal admittance) *hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and*

will ſup with him, and hee with me; let the Sinner bee old or young; a green head, or a gray head, if hee will but open the door, Chriſt will come in, and have communion and fellowſhip with him. So in that, *Matth.* 11. 28. turne to theſe Scriptures, and dwell upon them, they all clearly evidence the Call, and gracious invitations of Chriſt to bee to all Sinners, to every ſinner, he excepts not a man, no, though never ſo old, nothing ſhall hinder the Sinner, any ſinner, the worſt and moſt aged ſinner from obtaining mercy, if hee bee willing to open to Chriſt, and to receive him as his Lord and King. *Joh.* 6.37. But

Iſa. 55. 1
Joh. 7. 37
Rev. 22. 17

Seventhly, Chriſts Pathetical lamentation over all ſorts and ranks of Sinners, declares his willingneſſe to ſhew mercy to them; *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem,* (ſaith Chriſt, weeping over it) *that thou hadſt knowne in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, &c. O that my people had hearkened unto me!*

Luke 19. 41, 42
Pſa. 81. 13

mee ! Chriſt weeps over *Jeruſalem*, ſo did *Titus*, and ſo did *Marcellus* over *Syracuſe*, and ſo did *Scipio* over *Carthage*; but they ſhed tears for them, whoſe bloud they were to ſhed; but Chriſt weeps over the necks of thoſe young and old ſinners, who were to ſhed his bloud. As a tender-hearted Father weeps over his rebellious Children, when neither ſmiles, nor frowns, neither counſels, nor intreaties will win them, or turn them from their evil waies. So doth Jeſus Chriſt over theſe rebellious Jews, upon whom nothing would work. But

Eighthly and laſtly, Though aged ſinners have given Chriſt many thouſand denials, yet hee hath not taken them, but after all, and in the face of all denials, hee ſtill re-inforces his ſuit, and continues to beſeech them by his Spirit, by his Word, by his Wounds, by his Bloud, by his Meſſengers, and by his Rebukes, to turne home to him, to embrace him, to beleeve

Pſ. 65. 1, 2 Rom. 10. 21

1 Joh. 5. 2, 3

in him, and to watch with him, that they may bee ſaved eternally by him; all which beſpeaks gray-headed Sinners, not to deſpair, nor to diſpute, but to repent, returne, and beleeve, that it may goe well with them for ever. Conſider ſeriouſly what hath been ſpoken, and the Lord make you wiſe for eternity.

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